

MAURITIUS TIMES

"You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be defeated." -- Maya Angelou

Interview: Vasantt Jogoo, Environmental Safeguard Consultants & former Ag Secretary General - AfDB

St Louis Gate Affair :

“ We know how much time it takes for ICAC to complete an investigation (if it decides to complete it) ”

See Pages 7-8-9



Naufrage du vraquier Wakashio

La politique de vérité est essentielle sur toute la ligne

Par Aditya Narayan Voir Page 3



Opinion

Wakashio and its aftermath
Your best protections are thorough preparation for the worst and remaining eternally vigilant

By Stephen Spark See Page 4

The Conversation

Latin American women are disappearing and dying under lockdown

Reports of rape, domestic abuse and murdered women are way up in Brazil, Mexico, Peru and beyond since the coronavirus

By Lynn Marie Stephen See Page 18

Futile - and dangerous - diversion

The turn of events over the weekend presents a real risk of the creation of a futile - and dangerous - diversion in order to displace the Wakashio affair from the public's eye. This possibility has not escaped the attention of several silent observers of the political scene.

Otherwise, they ask, what explains the presence of apparent supporters of ministers Ramano and Maudhoo when they were due to appear at the Souillac Court, after the DPP had given the go-ahead signal? For it is well-known in our more recent political folklore that there is hardly ever any spontaneous mobilization for a politician - unlike the people's movement that has rallied around to face the impacts of the Wakashio shipwreck. It has involved not only those who have been directly and immediately affected but also more broadly Mauritian citizens belonging to all communities who have not been afraid of expressing their full support to their fellow compatriots. Their concern was not only for the local livelihoods, but has extended to the wider environmental, economic and social aspects, as also to the international image of the country as a tourist destination.

On the other hand, it is clear that there had also been a planned mobilization of supporters of the plaintiff in this case, Bruneau Laurette, within the precincts of the same court. As it could be anticipated, hot tempers led to some scuffles, but fortunately these were short-lived and will hopefully remain at that. Citizens are intelligent enough to grasp the seriousness of national issues, that the one such as the shipwreck represents. This is evidenced by the all-community mobilization to clean up the spill.

As citizens concerned about the safety and security of our country, and aware of the severe difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemic to a large number of people in terms of loss of employment, of revenue, of loans on house/car or children's education that need to be repaid and so on, this shipwreck has come as a major second shock while that of the pandemic is not yet over - doubled by the fear that a second wave may hit us when borders are opened to allow the tourism industry to function again, the very sector which is at stake in the current incident!

The genesis of the crisis post the shipwreck lies in the paucity of information coming from government ranks in Parliament in response to questions being put by members of the Opposition. In fact the latter have averred a number of times that sessions of Parliament are deliberately being altered so as to prevent them from asking questions and debating on the several aspects of the disaster that they feel need to be elucidated. As such, therefore, the representatives of the people are not being allowed to

play their role as they are expected too.

However, not only here but in other democracies elsewhere too the rules seem to allow governments some latitude - or whatever legal term applies -- to 'escape' questioning. Thus, this is what has happened in Canada, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau being taken to task for prorogation of Parliament, using Covid-19 as an excuse. This has been referred to as '...Trudeau's self-serving prorogation of Parliament...' in an article in **The Conversation**, and it is considered a 'controversial one, since it shuttered committee inquiries into the WE Charity affair that have already embarrassed the government', with the opposition calling the move a 'cover-up'.

In other words, does this mean that parliamentary practice provides for the government in a democracy to 'cover-up'? This is a lacuna or a weakness that legislators ought at some stage to address, surely? In our case, there is so much that needs clarification, not least the suspicious movements of the boats to and fro around the Wakashio, coming from Namibia via Madagascar, then going round to Riviere Noire which have been revealed by satellite imagery and shown during an interview on a TV channel. Have the authorities been so naïve as not to realise that there is such a thing as sophisticated satellite surveillance of the oceans - and all the data is recorded and stored, and is accessible to those who specialize in tracking movements across the oceans?

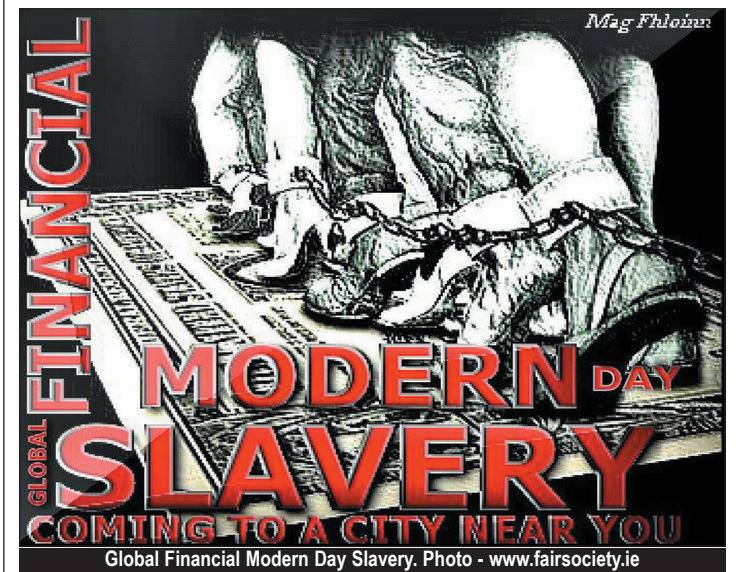
As we can see, there are enough problems that need to be resolved in connection with this incident, including that of a fair and equitable compensation to those who stand to be impacted. Such compensation must come from the shipping company so as to pre-empt any further drain of taxpayer money which is badly needed to deal with the myriad other issues that are impacting people as a result of the pandemic. As much as the Wakashio incident must not be used as an excuse to relegate the Covid-19 associated problems to the background, so too must a politico-communal twist not be used to distract attention from the real issues - the cause and circumstances of the Wakashio shipwreck and subsequent oil spill, and the corrective measures that should be put in place to avert the recurrence of a similar disaster in future and lead to more embarrassment for the country.

Let us all therefore be very vigilant and do our utmost to prevent such a slide that can only be immensely harmful to the country, and potentially devastate those who are in most need of assistance, and who are probably already reeling under the impact of Covid-19.

The Conversation

How the shadow of slavery still hangs over global finance

Slave traders transformed human lives into profit-bearing opportunities - just like modern finance



When the infamous Zong trial began in 1783, it laid bare the toxic relationship between finance and slavery. It was an unusual and distressing insurance claim - concerning a massacre of 133 captives, thrown overboard the Zong slave ship.

The slave trade pioneered a new kind of finance, secured on the bodies of the powerless. Today, the arcane products of high finance, targeting the poor and troubled as profit opportunities for the already-rich, still bear that deep unfairness.

The Gregsons, claimants in the Zong trial, were merchant princes of 18th century Liverpool, a city that had quickly grown to be one of the world's leading commercial capitals. The grandiose Liverpool Exchange building, opened in 1754, boasted of the city's commercial success and the source of its money, its friezes decorated with carvings of African heads.

But Liverpool's wealth also stemmed from its innovations in finance. The great slave merchants were also bankers and insurers, pioneers in what we today call financialisation - they transformed human lives into profit-bearing opportunities.

From the point of view of merchants, the Atlantic trade was slow, unreliable and risky. Ships were threatened by disease, by poor weather, and by the constant threat of insurrection. To speed up the flow of money, merchants began to issue credit notes that could travel swiftly and safely across the ocean.

Slaves would be purchased in Britain's African colonies and transported to the Americas where they were sold at auction. The merchant's agent would take the money received and rather than investing it in commodities like sugar or cotton to be sent back to Liverpool, they would send a bill of exchange - a credit note for the sum plus interest - across the Atlantic.

The bill of exchange could be cashed at a discount at one of the many banking houses in the city, or replaced by another, again at a discount, to be dispatched to Africa in payment for more human chattels. Credit flowed swiftly, cleanly and profitably.

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Naufrage du vraquier Wakashio

La politique de vérité est essentielle sur toute la ligne

Aditya Narayan

La catastrophe écologique causée par le naufrage du vraquier Wakashio à moins d'un kilomètre de la côte sud-est du pays, sur les récifs de Pointe d'Esny, a pris l'ampleur d'un événement historique sans précédent. D'abord, l'événement a été internationalisé grâce à la presse étrangère. Ensuite, au niveau local, il y a eu une mobilisation citoyenne formidable en vue d'endiguer la marée noire dans les lagons avec l'aide des volontaires et des ONGs. Cela est de bon augure pour l'engagement citoyen autour des enjeux nationaux relatifs au développement, plus particulièrement ceux ayant trait à l'environnement et au tourisme durable.

Non seulement les médias internationaux (BBC, RTI, CBC, Forbes, etc.) ont-ils rapporté la nouvelle, mais ils ont aussi posé des questions pertinentes sur la gestion du désastre écologique en donnant la parole aux différents porte-parole du Gouvernement, de l'opposition et de la société civile dans le cadre d'un reportage juste et équilibré, contrairement à la MBC qui ne donne qu'un seul son de cloche, celui du Gouvernement.

Rarement aura-t-on vu un événement national être l'objet d'une couverture internationale si intense, surtout avec l'engagement de Greenpeace International et d'autres organisations œuvrant pour la préservation de l'environnement. C'est dire que l'enjeu de la pollution marine dépasse le cadre strictement mauricien.

En effet, avec le réchauffement climatique provoqué par l'émission de gaz à effet de serre due à l'utilisation effrénée des combustibles fossiles, le monde est devenu plus conscient des risques écologiques d'un déversement massif d'hydrocarbures dans l'océan. Peu importe où il survient, le naufrage d'un navire transportant des milliers de tonnes d'huiles lourdes dans ses cales attire toujours l'attention des parties concernées partout dans le monde (mouvements écologistes, pays menacés par la marée noire, peuples autochtones vivant de la mer, agences internationales de développement, etc.).

Estimation des dommages

Face à la curiosité des médias nationaux et internationaux, les autorités locales ont donc intérêt à pratiquer une politique de vérité portant sur toutes les phases de la crise - avant, pendant et après la catastrophe. Il est absolument nécessaire d'éclaircir les zones d'ombre



Photo: pbs.twimg.com

Photo: AFP

“Pour des raisons politiques, il y aurait une tentation de minimiser l'ampleur des dégâts afin de ne pas situer la responsabilité des autorités dans le retard qu'elles ont mis à réagir promptement au désastre. Or, cette approche minimaliste risque de permettre à l'armateur d'esquiver sa responsabilité de compenser le pays adéquatement. Le pays prendra des années pour restituer les écosystèmes naturels au statu quo ante... Mais à court terme, c'est la pêche, l'industrie du tourisme et les activités connexes qui sont menacés existentiellement...”

sur les causes et les conséquences de la catastrophe afin de mieux comprendre ce qui s'est passé et parer à une éventualité pareille dans le futur. Les principes élémentaires de toute enquête sur le naufrage sont résumés dans une belle formule anglaise : *Who did what, when, where and why?* Cette politique de vérité est essentielle d'autant plus que le Gouvernement doit évaluer avec certitude l'ampleur des dégâts causés à la faune et la flore marines, au rivage et aux plages dans le sud-est afin de formuler une demande de compensation financière auprès de l'assureur et de l'armateur japonais du navire. Le chiffre de Rs 40 milliards de dommages a été brandi à la vaine, mais l'assureur exigera des preuves scientifiques des dommages. C'est là que personne n'a intérêt à sous-estimer les dégâts écologiques (dommages directs) et économiques (dommages indirects) dans le périmètre de 27 kilomètres carrés allant de Blue Bay à Poste Lafayette.

Pour des raisons politiques, il y aurait une tentation de minimiser l'ampleur des dégâts afin de ne pas situer la respon-

sabilité des autorités dans le retard qu'elles ont mis à réagir promptement au désastre. Or, cette approche minimaliste risque de permettre à l'armateur d'esquiver sa responsabilité de compenser le pays adéquatement. Une bataille juridique sur le montant de la compensation n'est pas à exclure.

Le pays prendra des années pour restituer les écosystèmes naturels au statu quo ante vu les effets pernicieux et de longue durée de la pollution pétrolière. Mais à court terme, c'est la pêche, l'industrie du tourisme et les activités connexes (plaisanciers, restaurants, vente de produits artisanaux, petits commerces, etc.) qui sont menacés existentiellement dans la région du sud-est.

Internationalisation

L'internationalisation de l'événement n'est pas mauvaise en soi. Loin d'être une mauvaise publicité pour le pays, elle a permis d'exposer l'insolence et l'outrecuidance du personnel navigant du navire qui a fait irruption dans nos eaux territoriales sans autorisation, les dangers du trafic

maritime intense dans l'océan Indien pour les pays insulaires et le manque de mécanisme de coordination entre pays voisins pour parer à toute éventualité.

Dans cette partie du monde, aucun pays ne peut faire cavalier seul en ce qui concerne les contrôles maritimes, la surveillance de navires trop libres, le combat contre la piraterie et la contrebande, et l'arraisonnement de bateaux suspects par la police maritime. Dès les premiers jours de l'incident, Maurice aurait dû faire appel aux puissances riveraines telles que la France, les Etats-Unis et l'Inde (présents dans l'océan Indien à la Réunion, aux Chagos et à Agaléga respectivement) puisqu'ils ont une capacité d'intervention supérieure.

Sur le plan de la planification, le pays a eu certainement tort de sous-investir dans les équipements de contrôle maritime (bateaux de patrouille, radars de surveillance, remorqueurs) et les équipements anti-pollution (cordons flottants, bouées d'absorption). Ce qui est plus troublant encore, c'est que même les équipements disponibles sont en panne (trois radars ne sont pas fonctionnels à Gris-Gris dans le sud, à Saint-Brandon et à Agaléga) ou n'auraient pas été utilisés à temps pour endiguer la marée noire. Il a fallu la mobilisation des volontaires et des ONGs pour confronter le défi alors que les services gouvernementaux étaient sur la touche pendant 13 jours.

La mobilisation citoyenne sans précédent, empreinte de patriotisme, a essayé de sauver les meubles avec les moyens du bord (bouées artisanales placées dans les lagons pour contenir le déversement d'huiles lourdes). Contrairement à une allégation officielle, entend-on dire, il n'y avait pas de "volontaires nuisibles" sur le terrain, mais des patriotes qui s'y sont engagés à cœur afin de protéger le littoral du sud-est, source de gagne-pain pour beaucoup de gens. Le Gouvernement serait mal inspiré de vouloir leur nier le crédit de l'action de salubrité publique entreprise sans peur et sans hésitation.

Chauvinisme

Aussi mal inspirée est la tentative dans certains milieux de s'offusquer des conseils que la France, par le biais de son ministre des outre-mer, Sébastien Lecornu, a donnés au Gouvernement concernant l'épave du vraquier. Celui-ci a dit sans ambages :

“Le contrôle maritime mauricien n'a pas complètement fonctionné comme le nôtre aurait fonctionné. Ce n'est pas du tout un jugement de valeur. C'est un fait.”

Il paraît que la France préférerait l'option de remorquer la partie avant (proue) du navire vers un chantier de déconstruction plutôt que de faire couler le navire (option recommandée par l'armateur) à 8 milles nautiques (14,8 kms) de la limite extérieure du récif, à 2000 mètres de profondeur. Le sabordage en mer du navire est-il un acte précipité après le laxisme post-naufrage pendant 13 jours?

● Suite en page 11

Wakashio and its aftermath

Your best protections are thorough preparation for the worst and remaining eternally vigilant



Stephen Spark

Mr Degnarain writing in the 21 August issue makes some very good points on the grounding of Wakashio and its aftermath, though I cannot agree with all of them. What follows is intended to stimulate thought and debate; I hope it will be taken in the friendly spirit in which it is offered.

Given the number of foreign environmental and other 'experts' in the country - many doubtless looking to make a name for themselves by writing up their findings in academic journals - it's clear that the shipping company's team will not have the field to itself. If Nagashiki Shipping and Japan P&I Club make unsupportable claims about the state of the lagoon, then there will be plenty of others who can aid Mauritius' case with their own assessments.

Of course, we should not be under any illusion that the lagoon was in a Paul et Virginie state of ecological innocence. What counts, though, is the decline from its state on 24 July to that on, say, 10 August. We will only be able to estimate the damage the spill has caused if we have full details about the pre-Wakashio state of the lagoon. Let us hope they exist.

As a very helpful video interview with English maritime lawyer Simon Daniels¹ makes clear, getting adequate compensation is likely to be complicated. Unfortunately, Mauritius did not ratify the 1996 update to the Bunkers Convention, which would have provided an enhanced level of automatic compensation - hence the need to prove some level of criminal culpability by charging the captain under the Piracy and Maritime Violence Act. As its name suggests, the purpose of that Act, which was introduced at the height of the Somali piracy crisis, was principally to provide a way of prosecuting pirates rather than captains of errant ships, so it remains to be seen how well this tactic works. Interestingly, Mr Daniels stated that by keeping Captain Nandeshwar in custody Mauritius is breaching his human rights.

It's reasonable enough for Mr Degnarain to advise the government to canvass a range of opinions on compensation and insurance, but I would caution against over-optimism. Mauritius cannot, on its own, change the way the global shipping and maritime insurance industries work. It will need to find how to get the best out of what exists rather than engaging in long and expensive legal battles in international courts that may waste time and money for no gain.

It would have helped if the government had invested sufficient resources in its maritime administration (the Shipping Department) to allow regular, active participation at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which is the London-headquartered UN body charged with formulating maritime regulations, including those for environmental protection. But the Shipping Department doesn't even have enough people to carry out its basic functions such as inspecting ships - the 2019 report of the Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding shows that Mauritius carried out just ONE port state control inspection (PSC) last year. PSC inspections are vital to ensure that ships visiting Port Louis comply with safety requirements and the all-important



“No coastal surveillance and warning system, however sophisticated, will be of the slightest use if vital equipment is offline or awaiting repair. Shipping is a 24/7, 365 days a year activity - it won't wait for Mauritius to fix its radar warning station or AIS unit. You must always assume that an emergency can happen NOW. That emergency will probably be quite unlike the last one. The next crisis may be a ship on fire in the port or a passenger vessel capsizing 100 nautical miles from shore in the Mauritian exclusive economic zone...”

welfare provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention.

I am not criticising the Shipping Department's personnel. They are experienced professionals who I have every reason to believe are doing their best, but there are too few of them and they clearly need more support. It can be argued that failure to take maritime seriously by successive governments contributed to the disastrous consequences of the Wakashio grounding. There is no way that Mauritius can realise any of its grandiose dreams of becoming a bunkering hub or a cruise hub or of making a fortune out of the Blue Economy without addressing the black hole in its maritime administration.

The Chagos Archipelago

Mr Degnarain mentions the possibly accurate, but certainly undiplomatic and unhelpful, comments by Henry Smith about the spill undermining confidence in Mauritius' ability to manage the pristine environment of the Chagos Archipelago. The author should relax a little: Smith is just an MP, and one that few people in Britain have ever heard of. Suggesting that he is part of some global communications campaign against Mauritius is a conspiracy theory too far. Nevertheless, Mauritius is going to have a hard job to convince the world it can be a responsible landlord of the Chagos and its vast EEZ when it cannot even protect the reef at Pointe d'Esny.

Even while dealing with the remains of Wakashio and the heartbreaking effects of the oil spill, a priority now should be to try to prevent any repetition.

Bolstering its maritime administration, mentioned above, is one urgent task. Amongst other benefits, this will allow Mauritius' voice to be heard at the IMO. Mauritius needs to make alliances with neighbouring countries and territories - all of which have a shared interest in the safety and management of the Indian Ocean - and also with small island states in other parts of the world. Many face exactly the same threats to their biosecurity and way of life from ships passing close to their shores.

How best to ensure the safety of the reefs, lagoons and coastline of Mauritius? Compensation apart, that surely is the crucial question.

One option would be to apply to the IMO to have the seas around Mauritius declared a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area². This would be marked on nautical charts, making it very clear that ships should not transit through those waters. Vessels would be required to keep to specific sea lanes in a traffic separation system (TSS). To achieve this, Mauritius

would need to bring together as many allies as possible so it can make a strong, evidence-based case at the IMO.

The protection a PSSA would provide would remain merely theoretical unless it could be properly monitored, patrolled and enforced. Those duties would fall to the National Coast Guard. If we have learned one thing from this sorry saga, it's surely that there are some serious failings within the NCG, which perhaps needs fundamental reform. While there are some superb professionals within the NCG, its internal communications and systems appear to be poor; like other state organisations, it is paralysed by protocols.

No coastal surveillance and warning system, however sophisticated, will be of the slightest use if vital equipment is offline or awaiting repair. Shipping is a 24/7, 365 days a year activity - it won't wait for Mauritius to fix its radar warning station or AIS unit. You must always assume that an emergency can happen NOW. That emergency will probably be quite unlike the last one. The next crisis may be a ship on fire in the port or a passenger vessel capsizing 100 nautical miles from shore in the Mauritian exclusive economic zone (EEZ) - what is the NCG going to do then? What are its plans for dealing with each and every shipping disaster scenario? Has it got the people, the training and the equipment to handle a big cruise ship in trouble or an Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carrier on fire? These are real world issues that need serious answers.

It's not only the people of Mauritius who need to know; it's also the people who operate, serve on, travel on and depend on the ships that pass through the EEZ. Mauritius owes a duty of care to every person on every ship that passes through its massive maritime domain.

Stephen Spark is a UK-based maritime journalist and book editor. For the past 20 years he has been reporting for international publications on port expansion, piracy, maritime safety and security, and airport development in the Indian Ocean. In his spare time he has been researching the history of the Mauritius Government Railways.

1. <https://www.facebook.com/SamuelVTReddy/videos/234836471077606>
2. <https://imohq.exposure.co/protecting-vulnerable-seas-from-shipping-and-marine-pollution>

The full text is available online.
Please consult: www.mauritiustimes.com

TikTok to launch legal action against Trump over ban

Chinese video app TikTok is set to launch legal action to challenge a ban imposed by US President Donald Trump.

Mr Trump's executive order prohibits transactions with TikTok's owner ByteDance from mid-September.

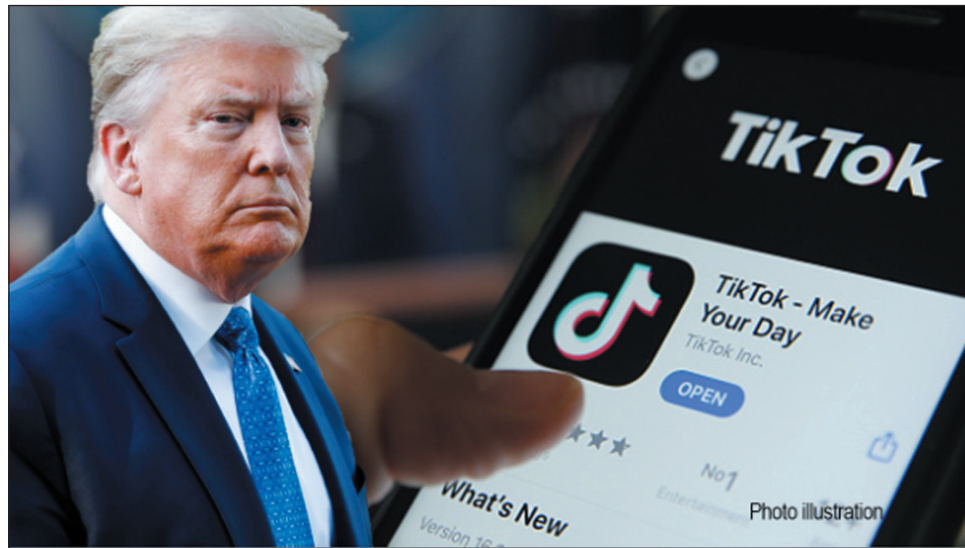
Officials in Washington are concerned that the company could pass data on American users to the Chinese government, something ByteDance has denied doing.

The short video-sharing app has 80 million active US users.

TikTok says it has tried to engage with the Mr Trump's administration for nearly a year but has encountered a lack of due process and an administration that pays "no attention to facts".

"To ensure that the rule of law is not discarded and that our company and users are treated fairly, we have no choice but to challenge the executive order through the judicial system," a company spokesperson said.

TikTok expects the legal action to



TikTok to launch legal action. Photo - a57.foxnews.com

begin this week, says BBC Business reporter Vivienne Nunis.

On Friday a group of Chinese-Americans filed a separate lawsuit against the president's similar ban on the social media app WeChat, which is owned by the Chinese firm, Tencent.

TikTok's users post short video clips on the platform on topics ranging from dance routines to international politics. Its popularity exploded in recent months particularly with teenagers and it has been downloaded more than a billion times around the world.

But Mr Trump claims China is able to use the app to track the locations of federal employees, collect information for use in blackmail, or spy on companies.

The growth of mobile apps developed and owned by Chinese firms "threatens the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States", Mr Trump says.

"This data collection threatens to allow the Chinese Communist Party access to Americans' personal and proprietary information," he claims in his executive order.

TikTok says it has never handed over any US data user to Chinese authorities.

Mr Trump's actions against TikTok and WeChat are the latest in a growing campaign against China ahead of the US presidential election in November.

Since taking office he has been waging a trade war against China.

The US is not the only country to introduce blocks on TikTok. India has banned use of the app, and Australia is also considering taking action.

US elections: All-out battle to woo Indian-American community

For the US presidential elections 2020, both parties have a full-fledged strategy to woo every segment of the Indian-American community, using every method, including religion, reports India Today

The courtship is intense, and voter targeting specific. In this US presidential race, Indian-Americans are no longer a monolith but a conglomeration of different religious identities.

The evolution has been slow but sure and opinion is divided whether separation as Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs benefits the community as a whole or helps India's case. The trend began in 2016 when candidate Donald Trump attended a rally of Republican Hindu Coalition and bid for the Hindu vote. Now Democrats are also getting in the game.

On Saturday, Democratic presidential nominee, Joe Biden, extended his greetings on the "Hindu festival of Ganesh Chaturthi" on Twitter as did his running mate Kamala Harris, whose mother was an Indian. Presidential candidates getting deep into Hindu festivals beyond the usual Diwali greetings is noticeable.

This time both parties have a full-fledged strategy to woo every

segment of the Indian-American community, using every method, including religion. A major reason behind the granular attention: Indian-Americans are one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups, and among the most highly educated and economically successful.

Of the roughly 4 million Indian-Americans, around 2.4 million are eligible voters. Of those 1.4 million live in nine battleground states. A vast majority of Indian-Americans are Hindus. The numbers grow if Hindus from the Caribbean, Africa, Nepal, and Bangladesh are counted.

Although the US Census Bureau doesn't record religious affiliation, research shows that Islam and Hinduism have the third and fourth-largest number of followers after Christianity and Judaism. Fighting for the Christian vote has always been integral to the US presidential elections but fighting for Hindu and Muslim votes is relatively new.

Last week, Republicans launched four new coalitions to

woo Indian-Americans, specifically targeting Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims in separate groups.

"Indian Voices for Trump," "Hindu Voices for Trump," "Sikhs for Trump" and "Muslim voices for Trump" will fight against the "socialist agenda" of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, the campaign said.

Adi Sathi, a Republican strategist, says Democrats may try as they might but in the end, it's "what they do" that will be important. "Republicans are actually helping the Indian-American community. Donald Trump is pro-legal immigration and a merit-based system, which benefits people of Indian origin," he told India Today TV.

Donald Trump was the first to appoint an Indian-American - Nikki Haley - to a cabinet position where she had direct access to the president, Sathi stressed. Nikki Haley is scheduled to address the Republican convention next week. "Republicans have more interest in India and are willing to take its side."

The new Republican coalitions will promote Donald Trump's agenda of "economic empowerment, quality education and law and order."

The terms have a subtext, especially "law and order", which



Photo - economictimes.indiatimes.com

triggers different feelings in different groups. Major US cities have been gripped by protests since the killing of George Floyd, an African-American, by a white policeman.

Protests have sometimes descended into violence and arson. Many older generation Indian-Americans are shocked by the breakdown of law and order and the sudden rise in gun violence in Chicago and New York.

Democrats vowed to protect the Indian-American community from "xenophobic attacks," specifically mentioning Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Jains" and "promised to have their backs".

Joe Biden's Agenda for Indian

American Communities released on August 15 promised more police protection for *mandirs*, *gurudwaras* and mosques, and streamlining of religious visas for priests.

Fragmentation of the community into Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs inevitably means an infusion of India-Pakistan issues into domestic US politics.

Divisions have sharpened since August last year when India changed the status of Jammu and Kashmir and Muslim-American groups began a campaign against Indian policies, pushing the US Congress to take action against India.

Cont. on page 6

Argentina joins Chinese coronavirus vaccine trial, says maker

Argentina joined Peru, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates in approving Phase 3 clinical trials for a coronavirus vaccine developed by China National Biotec Group (CNBG), the company said late Friday.

As China forges ahead in the global race to develop a vaccine to curb the Covid-19 pandemic and as cases within China dwindle, CNBG needs research participants from other countries for testing.

Phase 3 trials, which usually involve several thousand participants, allow researchers to gather data on the efficacy of potential vaccines for final regulatory approvals.

CNBG will partner with Argentina's ELEA in the vaccine trial, the Chinese company said in a statement late Friday.

The experimental vaccine by CNBG, a unit of state-owned pharmaceutical giant China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm), received approval from the UAE in June for a Phase 3 trial and has since recruited 15,000 volunteers.

The company said on Thursday that Peru and Morocco also approved the trials.

CNBG has also obtained approval from Bahrain for a Phase 3 study designed to involve around 6,000 participants.

Prince Charles leads Silver Jubilee tributes to UK's largest Hindu temple

To mark the 25th anniversary of the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in north London numerous world leaders, including Britain's Prince Charles and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, posted congratulatory messages as celebrations started remotely amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Popularly called the Neasden Temple was built as per the specifications in ancient Indian scriptures but also satisfies modern British building regulations. It prides itself as a "made in India, built in London" grand monument and is among the largest Hindu temples outside the country, reports NDTV.

In his special video message, heir to the British throne Prince Charles, who has made four visits to the temple on Holi and Diwali

over the years, reflected on its role not only as a place of worship, but also as one of cultural and religious learning, celebration, peace and community service.

"I have also been struck by the very special beauty and craftsmanship of the building," added the 71-year-old British royal.

The temple describes itself as a "humble tribute to the inexpressible beauty, majesty and glory of the Divine" and involved over 3000 volunteers in its creation.

It is made of 5000 tonnes of the Italian Carrara marble, Indian Ambaji marble and fine Bulgarian limestone. Its interiors of the haveli-style structure were entirely hand-carved in India by 169 craftsmen and then shipped to London for assembly.

Over the years, it has welcomed several dignitaries from

around the world, including UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson ahead of his election in December 2019 and Prime Minister Modi, when he was the chief minister of Gujarat.

Recalling his visit to the temple PM Modi wrote: "Neasden Temple marks its silver jubilee. The Temple has been at the forefront of many community service initiatives. It has brought people together and inspired them to work for humanity."

The silver jubilee celebrations involved musical tributes and prayers, which concluded with a Vishwa Shanti Mahapuja on Sunday.

"The mahapuja will also provide an opportunity for thousands across the UK, Europe and the rest of the world to pray for those affected by the global Covid-19



World leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Britain's Prince Charles, posted tributes to mark the 25th anniversary of the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir. Photo - twitter.com

pandemic," a temple spokesperson said.

Turkey's Erdogan hails huge natural gas find

A Turkish drilling ship has discovered a big natural gas reserve in the Black Sea.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told reporters that the drilling ship Fatih, which has been operating in the area since July, had found 320bn cu m (11.3 tr cu ft) of gas. He said it was Turkey's biggest natural gas find to date.

If Turkey can extract the gas commercially, it will be able to reduce its reliance on imported energy.

President Erdogan said all tests and engineering work had been completed. He added: "This reserve is actually part of a much bigger



Turkey hails gas discovery in Black Sea. Photo - www.thetimes.co.uk

source. God willing, much more will come.

There will be no stopping until we become a net exporter in energy."

President Erdogan said he hoped to start extracting the gas by 2023.

But energy experts say it could take up to a decade and billions of dollars of investment to get the gas into commercial use.

Turkey has also sent a ship to carry out a drilling survey in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Oruc Reis left port on 10 August, accompanied by five naval vessels. It was reported the next day to be sailing in waters between Crete and Cyprus.

This has infuriated the Greeks, as they disagree with Turkey over who holds the rights to certain areas of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Johnson pleads with parents to send children back to school when they reopen next month



Photo - i2.wp.com/metro.co.uk

Boris Johnson has urged parents to send their children back to school when they reopen in September, saying that yet more time outside the classroom is a greater health risk than returning, reports The Independent. The National Education Union also

planned risk".

* * *

A new report has found that Mr Johnson's Conservative Party used disinformation tactics with "a

accused ministers of being "negligent in the extreme", saying schools had been left in the dark on how to deal with a coronavirus outbreak. Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer has warned the exams crisis that has engulfed the government for a fortnight has put the reopening of schools "at

new level of impunity" during last year's general election. Researchers from King's College London warned that the campaign had risked undermining public trust during the pandemic.

Their report said Tories had "employed overt disinformation" to secure votes, such as by altering a video of Sir Keir and posing as a fact-checker on Twitter during a leaders' debate. "Even if some of these tactics are not novel, the impunity with which they were employed appears new, at least in the UK," it added.

"When found out, Conservative

Party representatives were unapologetic for rebranding their Twitter account as a fact-checking site, and for editing video footage of the interview with Sir Keir."

* * *

Embattled UK education secretary Gavin Williamson has defended a holiday he took just before the A-levels crisis erupted. Mr Williamson said he had been in Scarborough days before this year's results were released, but insisted he had been in constant contact with his department.

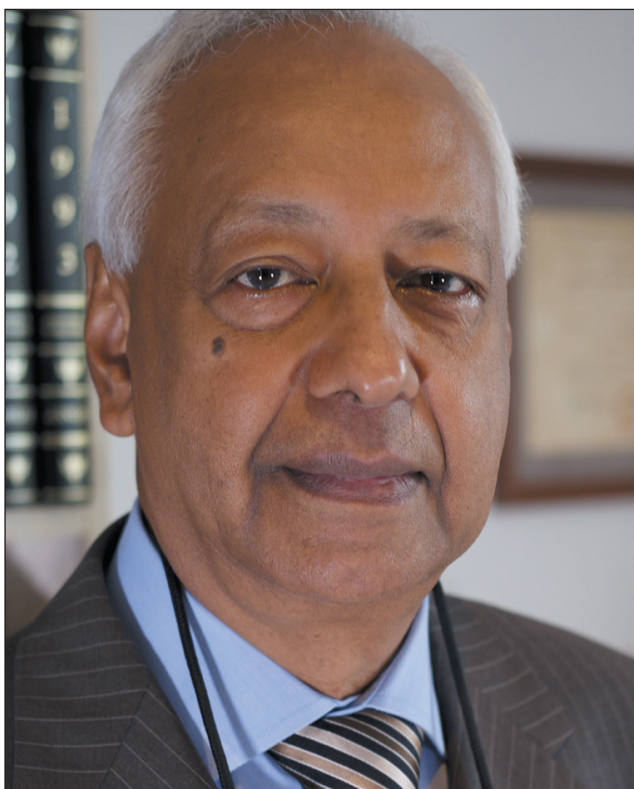
The secretary is under increasing pressure from his own MPs to ensure the planned reopening of schools for the first time in five months next week goes smoothly.

Compiled by D. Ramlallah

Vasantt Jogoo, Environmental Safeguard Consultants & former Ag Secretary General - AfDB

St Louis Gate Affair: “We know how much time it takes for ICAC to complete an investigation (if it decides to complete it)”

Dr Vasantt Jogoo is an environmental safeguards consultant with the World Bank. He has previously worked with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Commonwealth Secretariat. In the course of his career at the AfDB, he was given the opportunity to work in the Bank's General Secretariat and was then called upon to fill in the post of Secretary-General for a period of time after the installation of a new President in 2005. He worked closely with the President and advised him on many Board-related matters. He understands how the Bank works. He shares some thoughts on the debate surrounding the "document" received from the Bank in connection with the St Louis Power Station redevelopment project, and what it implies.



Mauritius Times: You had earlier in your professional career been Ag Secretary General of the African Development Bank (AfDB), which made the headlines a few weeks back following the investigation made by its Office of Integrity and Anti-Corruption into what came to be known as the St Louis Gate Affair. For having known the institution and the system at work therein, will you tell us how the system works, who is privy to confidential information and how and in what circumstances are such information shared within and outside the institution?

Vasantt Jogoo: The African Development Bank (AfDB), as a regional multilateral development bank (MDB), aims to promote sustainable economic development and social progress in its regional member countries, thus contributing to poverty reduction. Its shareholders are made up of 54 African countries (regional member countries) and 27 non-African countries (non-regional member countries). The AfDB commenced its operations on July 1, 1966. It has, since then, grown into a very strong and committed financial institution, garnering a strong vote of confidence from the international community which, in 2019, agreed to inject a historic USD 115 Billion into the Bank's capital.

The highest decision-making organ of the AfDB is the Board of Governors, which is composed of one Governor and one Alternate Governor appointed by each Member Country. This means that Mauritius, as a shareholder of AfDB, has a Governor representing our country and exercising a voting power proportionate to its capital subscription. Our Governor is the Minister of Finance (the Financial Secretary is the alternate governor). The Governors meet once a year (normally in May) to review the Bank's operations, make major policy decisions and provide strategic guidance.

The institution's general operations are, however, under the responsibility of a resident Board of Directors, exercising powers provided in the Articles of Agreement or other powers delegated to them by the Board of Governors. The Board of Directors comprises 20 members, 13 of whom are elected by the governors of regional countries and seven by the governors of non-regional member countries, for a three-year term. These Directors are the ones who take decisions on loans and grants approval and on policies that should guide the AfDB's work. Mauritius, being a small shareholder, teams up with three other countries to occupy one of the Director's chairs, and the directorship rotates every three years among them.

“It has become common knowledge among the international environmental community that Mauritius is quick at signing conventions and protocols, seeking large funds for their implementation and enthusiastically attending workshops and meetings around the world. The truth is that the country was totally unprepared, and as long as we do not mend the broken system and improve governance, we'll continue to deal with disasters...”

The Chief Executive Officer of the Bank is its President who is elected by the Board of Governors for a once renewable term of 5 years. He or she conducts the day-to-day business of the Bank. Interestingly, the President of the AfDB is the only elected president among all the MDBs. Dr Akinwumi A. Adesina, from Nigeria, became the eighth elected President of the Bank Group, on 1 September 2015.

This long introduction was necessary to contextualise the intricate, and at times conflictual, relationship among the various decision-making organs on the one hand, and the

constant tug-of-war between the mainly developed (and donor) non-regional members and the less developed (and mostly former colonies) on the other. The donor community wants to keep the Bank on a tight leash, much to the chagrin of the regionals who had dreamt of a development bank for Africa run by Africans. To minimise the cost of doing business and ensuring efficiency, it has obtained the assurance that the Bank harmonise its policies and procedures with all sister MDBs.

It is in this complicated environment that I found myself involved as Manager of Board Operations in the Office of the Secretary-General in 2004, under President Kabbaj.

“Action by the government to implement corrective measures should reassure the local population and the international community, in the hope that the “poster boy” image may be reclaimed. In parallel, the government should implement much-needed reforms in its civil service and bring back the locus of power and decision-making to the Government House...”

Then in 2005, I was called upon to assume the duties of Secretary-General, albeit in an acting capacity, to ensure the smooth installation of the Bank's new President (Dr Kaberuka) and guide him through the Board's operations. As such, I was entrusted with the responsibility of managing highly diverse stakeholders, strengthening institutional governance, and driving accountability. I was the first point of call for all Executive Directors wanting access to the President.

*** What about access to information about the Bank's operations, loans to member-states, etc?**

One of the harmonised policies that the Bank has adopted is a public disclosure policy to increase transparency in its operations. This is in recognition of the fact that many institutions, civil groups, and individuals have come to understand and appreciate the Bank's work and want to be involved in promoting the effectiveness of its operations. However, while there is a growing appreciation of the necessity of increased public consultation, the policy also recognises the need to maintain confidentiality on certain aspects, all specified in the disclosure policy.

Information that cannot be shared, except under certain strict conditions, include health data on staff, proprietary information and trade secrets submitted by prospective bidders during pre-qualification exercises, etc. Of specific significance is the provision that privileged information such as “legal advice and matters in dispute or under negotiation including, disciplinary and investigatory information generated in or for the Bank”, should be excluded from the general provisions of the policy.

Wakashio: 'The truth is that the country was totally unprepared, and as long as we do not mend the broken system, we'll continue to deal with disasters'

☞ Cont. from page 7

The investigations of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Department (IACD) fall under this restrictive rule.

*** Does this mean that only the governments of member-states can have access to the findings of the Office's investigations, not their anti-corruption agencies - and that's why ICAC's request for the full report about the CEB-Burmeister & Wain Scandinavian Contractor (BWSC) contract was turned down?**

Member-states do not automatically gain access to IACD's findings. To appreciate this, we must understand what the IACD stands for and how it operates. Established in November 2005 as an independent body, the IACD is staffed by seasoned professionals. Its aim is to deter sanctionable practices in internal corporate procurement issues and operations financed by the Bank Group. It adheres to the highest standards of corporate governance practice and integrity principles. It carries out independent investigations into allegations of corruption, fraud and other sanctionable practices in Bank Group Financed Operations, which are defined as "internal corporate procurement issues and operations financed by the Bank Group".

Once IACD receives an allegation of "sanctionable practice", it investigates, and its report is forwarded to the relevant authority under the Bank's sanctions process. Where the allegations relate to staff, the report is transmitted to the President. In other cases, it is the Sanctions Commissioner who receives the report. The IACD itself does not make sanction decisions, but the findings of its investigations help the Bank in furthering its anti-corruption agenda and promoting ethical business practices and good governance consistent with international standards as part of their lending and investment decisions. Strictly speaking, these findings are not disclosed to third parties in conformity with IACD's mandate and principles.

*** How come our Prime Minister obtained access to the Executive Summary of the IACD's report?**

There is an exception. Under IACD's guiding principles, when the need to refer information relating to an investigation to the appropriate national authority is warranted, it is only the President who has the discretion to grant such access.

For the President to entertain a request for exception, the Government (the Bank's shareholder) puts in a request justifying the need to be made aware of the findings of an investigation involving national interest through its Governor (Ministry of Finance). The Governor will then transmit the Government's request to its resident Executive Director. The resident Executive Director has almost immediate access to the President (I know this for a fact) and receives

☞ **Action by the government to implement corrective measures should reassure the local population and the international community, in the hope that the "poster boy" image may be reclaimed. In parallel, the government should implement much-needed reforms in its civil service and bring back the locus of power and decision-making to the Government House...**



the President's assent (if he is satisfied that such disclosure will help in furthering the Bank's anti-corruption drive).

The President would be inclined to accede to the Government of Mauritius's request, and I assume the Prime Minister did receive what appears to be an Executive Summary of the full report. This Executive Summary, which the Prime Minister brandished in the Assembly, apparently provided enough information of a nature that brought about the revocation of the Deputy Prime Minister. ICAC, any other agency or individual, would not, therefore, have obtained direct access to any of the findings of IACD. They will have to go through the proper channels to get the President's attention. In no case, however, will a full report be shared.

Hon Mohamed also committed the mistake of addressing his request to Mr Bacarese, IACD's director, who responded strictly by the book. He is not mandated to share any report. To use the response of Mr Bacarese to insinuate that the "paper" brandished by the PM during an Assembly session as fake, was a big blunder on the part of Hon Mohamed.

*** It would seem the AfDB's Office of Integrity and Anti-Corruption has very solid credentials given that the Bank is acting on its findings, and even going to the length of debarring companies engaged in fraudulent and collusive practices. Is that correct?**

The IACD cannot be faulted for lack of credible credentials. It is presently led by a British national, Alan Bacarese,

who is a veteran of the British Crown Prosecution Service, a former Senior Crown Prosecutor and former technical advisor to the UK's delegation to the OECD's Working Group on Bribery. It even actioned an investigation into President Adesina's governance, human resources, deals and management (the independent investigation cleared the President ultimately).

The IACD itself does not take sanctions. Its reports are sent to the Sanctions Commissioner who decides on next steps. As we all know, the seriousness of the allegations of malpractice against Burmeister & Wain Scandinavian Contractor was so overwhelming that sanctions had to be applied. BSWC, being such a major contractor working closely with the MDBs and operating from an EU country, agreed to the 21-month suspension from all procurement exercises launched by AfDB. This sanction is automatically applied by all MDBs for their projects as well. To agree to debarment from big MDBs like the World Bank reflects the level of malpractice that must have occurred. The agreement on debarment included, most probably, a non-disclosure clause.

☞ **ICAC, though denied direct access to full the investigative report, is aware of the contents of the Executive Summary obtained by the Prime Minister. If ICAC wants to investigate further, it will have to conduct its own due diligence as provided for by the laws of the country. A report prepared under a different set of rules for a specific purpose would help to some extent but would not be admissible in a Mauritian court of law. But we know how much time it takes for ICAC to complete an investigation (if it decides to complete it)...**

*** AfDB's investigation was initiated after BWSC had self-reported to the Bank upon concluding its own investigation, conducted by the external law firm Poul Schmidt. The suspects were identified, action has been taken by both parties - debarment of BWSC by AfDB, BWSC's employees fired... It shouldn't take much time for ICAC to go to the bottom of the matter, isn't it?**

As I said before, the Bank conducts investigations to help it further its own anti-corruption agenda. ICAC, though denied direct access to full the investigative report, is aware of the contents of the Executive Summary obtained by the Prime Minister. If ICAC wants to investigate further, it will have to conduct its own due diligence as provided for by the laws of the country. A report prepared under a different set of rules for a specific purpose would help to some extent but would not be admissible in a Mauritian court of law. But we know how much time it takes for ICAC to complete an investigation (if it decides to complete it).

Yes, we all believe that ICAC can conclude such an investigation in no time, but reality is otherwise. ICAC does not have access to the same elements and witnesses as IACD. It will have to establish a proper protocol with the Danish authorities to be able to access the main protagonists in the case. Not much has transpired from ICAC's side. This is not the first case where the main protagonists are nationals of other countries.

☞ Cont. on page 9

“Our image as the “poster-boy” of Africa has been shattered, and Wakashio is a wake-up call”

☞ Cont. from page 8

*** Even if ICAC has been denied access to the full report of the investigation conducted by the Office of Integrity and Anti-Corruption, it could still have made a formal request to BWSC for its law firm's report. That should have helped to expedite the investigation?**

This is best answered by our legal experts. I am certain there are some means to agree with BWSC or the Danish authorities to share information, but to what end? Shall we be able to get the main characters in the saga to testify in some way or other before our courts? ICAC already has some information and it will have to carry its own full diligence and investigation to be able to formulate accusations that will stand in court. BWSC has already agreed to sanctions. It may feel that it has already been punished enough and may not be in a mood to suffer more pain.

Mauritius is a small market and it does not stand to lose much even if the Government retaliates for non-cooperation (which won't happen because, according to the findings, members of government administration were the main beneficiaries of corrupt practices).

*** A Deputy Prime Minister has been forced to step down, the leader of the MMM has been named, and the AfDB's Office of Integrity and Anti-Corruption has pointed an accusing finger towards unnamed “members of the Mauritian administration” who would have been financially rewarded through the intermediary of third parties. ICAC's investigation is underway. What do you think will happen at the end of the day?**

Government is underestimating the capacity of the Mauritian population to feel outrage. We are already feeling the rumblings of this outrage across all sections of the population. Frankly, at the end of the day, nothing will happen on the official side. ICAC will investigate at its own pace. The population (at least a large section of it) is conscious of the deliberate delaying tactics used by government and its agencies. So, at the end of the day, it's the people of the country who will decide on the fate of those “members of the Mauritian administration”.

The Deputy PM was revoked after he refused to step down. The PM justified the revocation based on the seriousness of the allegations he found in the AfDB's summary findings. He was even shown a copy of the document. However, in case of Hon Bérenger, the only thing we know is that his name appears in the same document. He was denied access to a copy of the document and he was denied a basic right to defend himself.

We'll recall that, soon after his revocation, the DPM made an appearance before the media and insinuated a parallel with the PM's MedPoint case. What these insinuations are we do not know. But immediately after, the PM stopped alluding to the seriousness of the findings against his DPM, and Hon Collendavelloo found himself cosily ensconced in a backbencher's seat (much to the dismay of those believing in a breakup of the MSM-ML entente).

But one thing is certain: The Bank's President (and some of the major non regional member-countries) are not amused with the way our PM has used privileged information provided. As I pointed out earlier, the Bank was expecting Mauritius to use such information to promote the Bank's anti-corruption agenda, not to obtain political mileage out of it!

*** Another issue that has hit the headlines recently is the MV Wakashio shipwreck and oil spill, the level of preparedness of our institutions, political leadership,**

etc. But all this appears to be still very foggy. Could it be that the Government had been misled by the administration and the technicians?

Government has been misled by its own short-sightedness, and total disrespect for good governance. The governance system is broken, and it is not clear how and where decisions are made. The Wakashio incident should have never happened in the first place. In fact, in recognition of the risks posed by our location with respect to a major shipping route linking Asia and South America, a National Oil Spill Contingency Plan was prepared with donor support in 1990. Numerous incidents occur each year in which oil or chemicals are released into the environment, the most common of which relate to vessels that run aground on or near the shoreline, breaking and in the process releasing their own fuel or their oil cargo.

“Government has been misled by its own short-sightedness, and total disrespect for good governance. The governance system is broken, and it is not clear how and where decisions are made. The Wakashio incident should have never happened in the first place. In fact, in recognition of the risks posed by our location with respect to a major shipping route linking Asia and South America, a National Oil Spill Contingency Plan was prepared with donor support in 1990...”

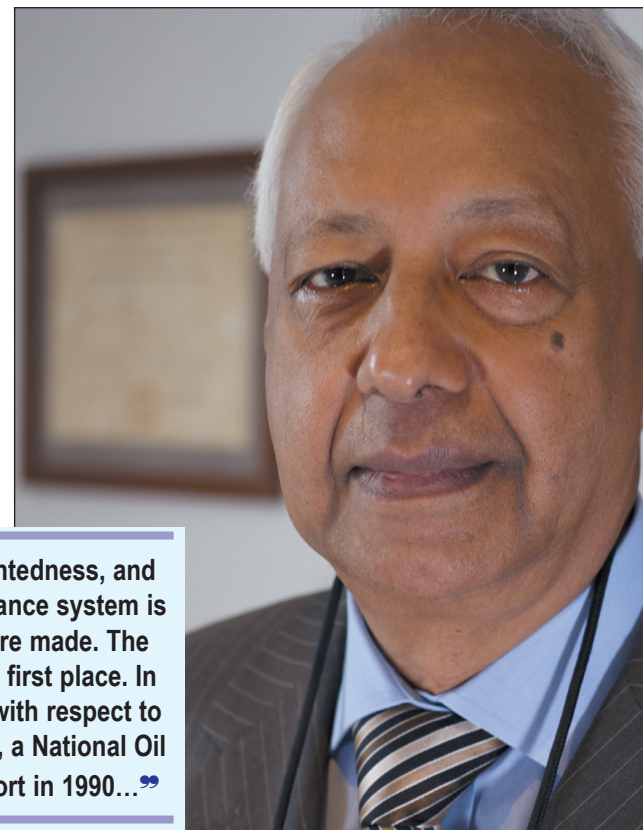
Over the years, the country has benefited significantly from the largesse of the donor community in developing preparedness. What caught everyone by surprise was not the wreck but the realisation that we were functioning (at the public sector level) in a broken system and no one appeared to be in charge. Though the oil spill contingency plan was activated from day 1, we never heard of any concrete action being initiated.

Prof Christian Bueger from Copenhagen, in a recent article that was reproduced in this paper, said that officials from Ministries of Environment and Fisheries attended a UNEP-sponsored workshop on 'Cooperation in preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents' in Zanzibar in March this year. During the workshop, our representatives asserted, with full confidence, that “the country has a range of sophisticated planning, response and disaster assessment tools”.

It has become common knowledge among the international environmental community that Mauritius is quick at signing conventions and protocols, seeking large funds for their implementation and enthusiastically attending workshops and meetings around the world (very often by administrative cadres who have absolutely nothing to do with technical meetings). The truth is that the country was totally unprepared, and as long as we do not mend the broken system and improve governance, we'll continue to deal with disasters (especially as they become more common due to climate change) in an amateurish way.

*** If we want to come out of this stronger, it might be necessary to have an independent inquiry into the shipwreck and oil spill, which will also allow us to be better prepared to deal with such accidents in the future, isn't it?**

Yes, the perception of “government inertia” has to be corrected and our government will have to demonstrate that it is ready to learn from the Wakashio lesson and is willing to take necessary corrective measures. This is going to be the bigger challenge. A full post-mortem, or audit or what-



ever one wishes to call it, needs to be undertaken immediately. Such an exercise should be undertaken by an international team of experts to ensure that it is an independent assessment.

Action by the government to implement corrective measures should reassure the local population and the international community, in the hope that the “poster boy” image may be reclaimed. In parallel, the government should implement much-needed reforms in its civil service and bring back the locus of power and decision-making to the Government House. Public participation in the public decision-making process should be encouraged.

*** A workshop organised by the Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning, which is headed by Steven Obeegadoo, was held recently, and it addressed among other things “l'aménagement du territoire” with a view to making best use of our limited land resources. What's your take on that?**

Another workshop will not add any value. We need to remember that land use management is the foundation stone for effective sustainable development. But like all other aspects of sustainable development, talk about transitioning to a greener economy have largely remained in the realm of intentions. Our understanding of sustainable development has been centred around three aspects: economic, social and environmental. However, we have largely underestimated the significance of the political aspect.

Without meaningful political leadership, political survival will largely dictate policy. So long as political leadership is lacking, not much progress will be achieved in promoting a rational use of land resources. When faced with the need to arbitrate between the economy and the environment, leaders invariably opt for growth. And who decides where to invest? The one bringing the money, of course. The “Assises de l'environnement” has brought what concretely? Our image as the “poster-boy” of Africa has been shattered, and Wakashio, therefore, is a wake-up call. Our political leaders had better take note. They should clearly recognise the capacity of people to be outraged and to mobilise.

• *Not brute force, but only persuasion and faith are the kings of this world - Thomas Carlyle*

The Problem of Salaries and Wages in Mauritius

Jay Narain Roy

The time has now come for us to review the entire field of salaries and wages in Mauritius. Salaries and wages have gone on in a haphazard manner and there has been little or no attempt to view the problem in the proper perspective. The two Commissions expressed divergent views and this is a further proof of the complexity of the problem.

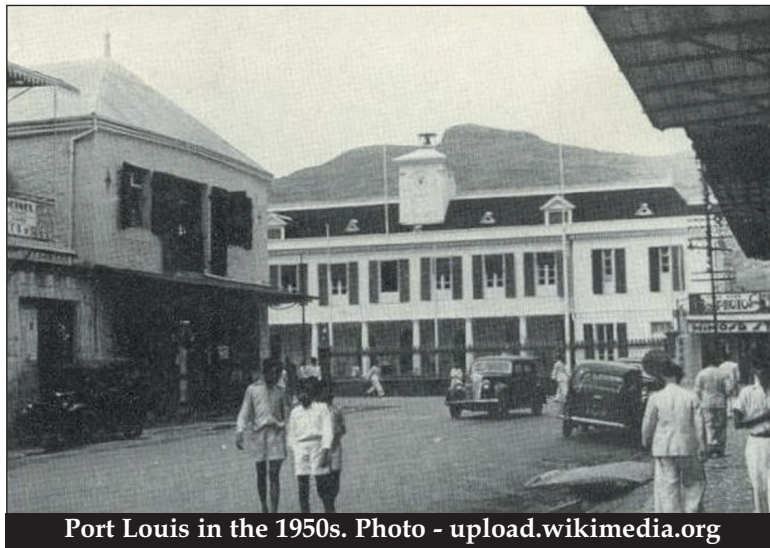
Probably we have so far looked at it essentially from the point of view of the outsider. It is clear that the outsider's sole interest is to increase his salary to draw higher pension. In order to do this, he is dying to invoke foreign standards of similar posts. Once the salaries of some posts are increased, there is a general clamour from all ranks and it is difficult to stop the slide.

But salaries must be related to two things - the financial power of the country and the standard of living. They should also have some bearing on skill and responsibilities but in gauging these, it becomes ultimately a problem of standardising human conscience. This is the most difficult problem of the moral sciences. To raise salaries appear to be a benevolent exercise for people who brush off administrative responsibilities in the desire to appear heroic. But the real trouble starts when under shrunken national economy we have to reduce and retrench. Somebody will have to face the music sooner or later particularly because our economy is too centred to last.

The Practice outside Government

The following are some of the tendencies on the industries: (a) most people are on monthly employment and are able to keep to a uniform standard of living but the labourers must inflate and deflate his stomach during the various seasons as the difference in his scale of wages from one part of the year to another is inhuman and fantastic, (b) a heavy charge of bonus is saddled on to salaries and the bonus too is variously distributed following largely the whims of the demi-Gods, (c) even adolescents of the class of the owners get higher salaries than others with long and satisfactory service and this completely eliminates efficiency and usefulness to feed nepotism, (d) while many field works are being suppressed to keep away the manual workers, there is a conscious attempt to create sinecure posts for the kith and kin largely to show imposing overheads, and (e) while during intercrop all authorities appear to ignore the existence of the unemployed or under employed, all resources are geared during the crop to supply abundant labour to grease the crop period.

These are things that no civilised community can accept and they have gone on worsening during the years when we have tried to muster more administrative power. The smooth years have seen the industrial concerns grow up into a kind of Leviathan and bargaining power of trade unions has been gagged and muzzled. It is merely a unilateral dictation of wages and salaries and it has become difficult for any labour organizations to rear its head or even to organise effectively. Not only that the spur by the authorities to form strong trade unions is practically *non est* but one sometimes also gets the impression that some superfluous profits are being mobilised to undo the existing organisations. Some Trade unionists often transform themselves into the election pals of the reactionaries



Port Louis in the 1950s. Photo - upload.wikimedia.org

and this gives us fearfully to think.

In the private concerns, salaries and wages are looked at from different angles by the employer and the employee. To the employer they are a comfortable fraction of the profits. Economy is largely sought on the shoulders of the sweating men. The more he can keep the position under his thumb, the more he can pile up profits. He will increase only when he is bayed to the stake. The employee looks at the usefulness of labour in the general economy of the industries and at the possibility of surmounting the standard of living in the country. He realises that labour wages far from being tugged on to the caprices of the employer should follow certain civilised patterns and proportions. But with all his realization he feels himself impotent to take a stand that will entail subsistence on pittance for any protracted period. This dread is reinforced by the almighty power of the employer.

We have allowed this state of things to go on because the administrative pattern was Toryish and we were severely helpless to fight the grinding wheel. When the authorities have to make a case for the protection of the industries, they are painted as national concerns but they become private concerns when we demand that, being national concerns, they should ensure fair play to all the factors that sweat to ensure their prosperity. But this cannot continue if we can make the least vaunt of Responsible Government and popular ministries. This I consider to be among our major problems and it would be suicidal to sleep over it when the country is facing unprecedented frustration and squalor.

Salaries in Government

It has been found that since the last ten years or so, a dismal attempt has been done to shelve certain Government functions into autonomous Boards and they have a tendency to conserve most of the salary predilections of the industries. This clever manoeuvre is becoming too flagrant to escape attention and it can only be a Tory creation that must go sooner than we imagine.

Can the island administration bear the heavy charge of the present salary budget? What is the proportion of direct and indirect salaries to what is expended purely and simply for the welfare of the people? If we agreed to increase the country's budget, it was not to inflate salaries and to create sinecure posts for protégés but to push forward the social services and to ensure health and welfare to the people. The first concern of Development Funds have so far been to create multifarious posts and we have had

instances of appointed officers having arrived here to mark time, months and years before arrangements were made for their machinery to begin to function.

A case is today being made for the increase of salaries of experts and highly skilled officers. These appellations must be clearly defined as we have had in the past people who were important as experts and who were no greater experts than Sancho Panza. Some of them made the country waste large amount of money in vainglorious experimentations. It is quite true that we do need some really efficient people to tide over our planning periods. They should be people who know their jobs inside out and who would guarantee speed and concrete results. As such people come for a time, we could consider the possibility of increasing their salaries only with the idea of attracting them to push forward our welfare and to train Mauritians to take over. But it should also be clearly understood that such increase of salaries should be treated as an exception rather than a rule and that increase of salaries should imply a decrease of the number. It should by no means provide the bait for other demands.

The New Outlook

We should try to understand very clearly our approach to this complicated problem. The salaries should invariably be tied to our national income. No comparison is to be entertained with other colonies having a different set of economy or which have resources of future development superior to our own. Apart from this aspect, it should also be understood that the bureaucracy in a directly governed colony should follow a different pattern from the one under Responsible Government. Under the latter, the administration must first and foremost serve the country and the people and not Whitehall's protégés. This is a fundamental change in the whole conception of government.

It should be our careful endeavour to see that initiatives and capacity to face problems should gradually pass over to those who were so far relegated to the position of chair-heaters or minute-scribblers in the clouds. The sense of killing time, of constantly keeping eyes of the clock or quietly working only for the size of the salaries should gradually change to the desire to push the country forward, to show speedy results and to face knotty problems. It is this new conception that will make our officers come to be marked out for a natural promotion.

But while we are unduly blatant about increase of salaries, we do appear to completely ignore the thousands of employees of Government at the lower rung of the ladder who have no sense of security even after a lifelong service and who during the crop are ingeniously discharged to cater to the needs of the industries. What civilised justification is there for increasing salaries at the top when these people have been left to wallow in wretchedness and abject despair? No moral justification can be made for any increase of existing salaries unless the wage-earning labourers in the Government Services have been uplifted to a human standard of existence. If fact can we guiltlessly raise the problems of workers outside the Government if we do not put our own house in order?

These are some of the angles and aspects under which this extremely important matter of salaries and wages must be envisaged. I have no doubt that the country is feeling that this matter will receive the first attention of any Responsible Government. Much of our future development hangs on the degree of success we can achieve in salvaging the people from their encircling sense of frustration.

Naufrage du vraquier Wakashio

La politique de vérité est essentielle sur toute la ligne

● Suite de la page 3

Au lieu de regarder la réalité en face, certains ont vu dans la position de la France un soupçon de paternalisme, affichant ainsi un chauvinisme de mauvais aloi. Ils oublient que la France veut protéger son patrimoine marin à la Réunion contre toute pollution éventuelle.

De leur côté, les Etats-Unis et la Grande Bretagne, qui disposent de facilités importantes aux Chagos, n'ont pas emboîté le pas à la France pour venir au secours de Maurice. Ces deux pays n'ont pas encore avalé l'humiliation qu'ils ont subie auprès de la Cour internationale de justice, qui a donné gain de cause à Maurice dans le litige à propos de la souveraineté sur l'archipel des Chagos. Un député conservateur anglais a jeté de l'huile sur le feu de la controverse en suggérant que l'impréparation de Maurice face au désastre écologique prouve qu'il n'est pas capable d'assurer la protection de la zone marine autour des Chagos.

Cela n'empêche pas de poser la question de savoir si Maurice veut récupérer

les Chagos afin d'y réinstaller les îlois et d'exploiter ses potentialités (une cause souveraine) ou veut simplement obtenir un loyer des Américains en contrepartie de la location de la base de Diégo Garcia (une cause pécuniaire).

Procès privé

Sur le plan local, un autre événement historique s'est produit. Pour la première fois dans les annales juridiques, un citoyen, en l'occurrence Bruneau Laurette, a intenté un procès privé contre deux ministres, notamment le ministre de l'Environnement et le ministre de la Pêche, leur reprochant de n'avoir pas assumé leurs responsabilités dans le contexte du naufrage du navire Wakashio. C'est une initiative louable et courageuse dans la mesure où elle permettrait au Directeur des Poursuites Publiques (DPP) de décider si une accusation de négligence criminelle pourrait être portée contre les deux ministres.

Le 12 septembre, la Cour de Grand Port dans le sud prendra connaissance de la position du Commissaire de police



Photo: static.independent.co.uk

après la demande d'explications du DPP auprès des deux parties concernées (plaignant et défendeurs).

Notre système juridique a la capacité de permettre un recours citoyen à la justice sur une question d'intérêt national pour peu que quelqu'un en prenne l'initiative sans peur et sans faveur. L'occasion est ainsi donnée au DPP de jouer efficacement son rôle constitutionnel dans la plénitude de ses droits. Pendant trop longtemps certains détenteurs de postes

constitutionnels à Maurice (Président de la République, Commissaire de police) n'ont fait qu'exécuter les décisions du pouvoir au mépris de leurs prérogatives. Ce procès privé est une opportunité de démontrer l'indépendance du DPP dans le cadre de la séparation des pouvoirs, un principe de notre démocratie qui est menacée par des tentations autoritaires. C'est un acte citoyen et non-partisan. Il faut l'apprécier à sa juste valeur.

Aditya Narayan

The Conversation

How the shadow of slavery still hangs over global finance

Cont. from page 2

This evolution of private credit did not originate in Liverpool. It had underpinned the Florentine banking dynasties of the 15th century and gave rise to money as we know it now.

The obscene novelty of the slavers' banking system was that this financial value was secured on human bodies.

The same practices continued on the plantations, where the bodies of slaves were used as collateral on loans allowing the expansion of estates and the acquisition of yet more productive bodies. The slaves were exploited twice: their freedom and labour stolen from them, their captured "economic value" leveraged by cutting edge financial instruments.

The Liverpool merchants also pioneered the use of insurance as a means of guaranteeing the financial value of their commodities. The slavers had long recognised that the only way to survive the occasional total losses that expeditions incurred was to gather together in syndicates and share the risk.

So when the captain of the



Zong realised he was unlikely to land his cargo of sickening and malnourished slaves, he ordered 133 souls to be thrown overboard. The perverse legal logic was that if part of the cargo had to be jettisoned to save the ship, it would be covered by the insurance.

These bodies-as-financial-commodities had only speculative value. Insurance made it real and bankable. This was true in 18th century Liverpool and it remains so in 21st century Wall Street.

Financialisation today

Financialisation has since taken many forms, but basic elements remain the same. It is based on uneven power relations that capture future individual obligations and make them saleable. The contracts underlying the 2008 credit crisis, for example, turned future mortgage payments into tradeable financial securities with actual present value.

For those issuing the bonds, the profit was risk free. The risk

was borne by predominantly poor Americans, whose adverse credit ratings and lack of financial skills made them easy prey for the issuers of mortgages so constructed as to lock them into economic bondage. These people were disproportionately black, Latino or migrant.

Insurance played a part here, solidifying the speculative value of investments to the benefit of traders. And when the bubble finally burst governments stepped in to maintain this system, the US Federal Reserve supporting giant insurer AIG to the tune of US\$182 billion (£139 billion) while many people lost their homes.

The credit crisis bailout is eerily reminiscent of another. By the time of abolition slave ownership was so embedded in British society that the government was forced to compensate individual owners for the loss of their capital – it required an enormous loan that taxpayers only finished paying off in 2015.

I'm not saying that bankers today are like slave traders. But I am saying that contemporary finance is still riddled with regimes of dominance and

exploitation at work.

Take contemporary philanthrocapitalism, where finance seeks to do good while also benefiting investors. Novel financial instruments position social problems as an opportunity for profit. The bodies of prisoners, for example, become implicated in schemes to prevent recidivism with personal character reform the trigger for investment payouts.

Schemes such as this make social problems the responsibility of individuals and ignore the structural relations of austerity that lie behind them. Finance wins twice, praised for solving the very same problems that it has benefited from creating.

Beware financiers bearing gifts. Student loans, mortgage bonds, social impact bonds, even biodiversity investing – all earning rents from the captured future activities of relatively powerless individuals – bear the shadow of the Atlantic trade.

Philip Roscoe
University of St Andrews

Entrepreneurship

Apple's Steve Jobs and IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad share these 3 personality traits



Drake Baer - Business Insider

Author Malcolm Gladwell -- who's sold some 4.5 million books -- says that entrepreneurs like Steve Jobs and IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad become so successful thanks to a rare combination of personality traits: they are open to experience, conscientious, and disagreeable.

Let's go over each:

- **Openness** to experience describes the way you relate to new information. If you get really excited about novelty, then you're highly open -- which is the greatest predictor of creative achievement.

- **Conscientiousness** describes how well you attend to details. If you're organized, responsible, and plan ahead, then you're highly open -- which is the greatest predictor of career success.

- **Agreeability** describes how much you need other people's approval. So if you're highly disagreeable, then you don't really care what people think -- which, as Gladwell argues in "David and Goliath," is a predictor of making innovation happen.

These are three of the so-called Big 5 personality traits, which psychologists take to be the most best model for personality, as it's much more empirically verified than the Myers-Briggs and other tests. The other two traits are extroversion and emotional stability.

Gladwell says the combination of openness and conscientiousness is as scarce as it is powerful.

There are lots of people who are creative without being conscientious, Gladwell said -- the cafes of Brooklyn are full of them. And there's lots of conscien-

tious people who aren't creative -- like, he says, an accountant.

"It's rare to have those two qualities in combination, to be both someone with an imagination to dream up some radical way of doing things and the relentless focus to make it happen," Gladwell said. "Add to that the third thing: You also must be disagreeable."

Why disagreeable? Here's Gladwell in "David and Goliath":

But crucially, innovators need to be disagreeable ... They are people willing to take social risks -- to do things that others might disapprove of.

That is not easy. Society frowns on disagreeableness. As human beings we are hardwired to seek the approval of those around us. Yet a radical and transformative thought goes nowhere without the willingness to challenge convention.

So what happens when you have openness, conscientiousness, and disagreeableness wrapped up in one person?

You have Steve Jobs, who had no worries about stealing the graphic user interface from Xerox PARC.

You have IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad, who outsourced his manufacturing to Poland during the height of the Cold War, which Gladwell says earned him the moniker of "traitor" in his native Sweden.

Kamprad -- open enough to invent new methods of making furniture, conscientious enough to relentlessly expand his business -- was also disagreeable. So he dutifully ignored his haters.

Work Smarter

Leaders, don't just respond to the moment - plan for the future

When you're in the midst of a crisis, it can be hard to think past your short-term response. But, as a leader, your primary focus needs to be on the long term. After all, it's your job to lead your people into the best possible future. To be able to do that, you need to delegate. Trust your people to handle the immediate response, and provide them with support and guidance to make tough decisions. Your time should be dedicated to planning for the future. You need to anticipate the obstacles that will arise in the next weeks, months, and even years, and set a course for your organization accordingly. If you can focus on what lies ahead, rather than what's happening now, you're more likely to emerge from the crisis stronger than before.

This tip is adapted from "Are You Leading Through the Crisis ... or Managing the Response?," by Eric J. McNulty and Leonard Marcus

Design your meeting agenda around questions

A good agenda is the first step to any successful meeting. If you want to make the best use of everyone's time, turn your bullet points into questions that drive to the outcomes you're looking for. For example, instead of a general topic like "Budget Problems," try a specific question like, "How will we reduce our spending by \$100,000 by the end of the fiscal year?" Or replace an item like "Strategic Planning" with a challenge like, "What is the key market threat we need to be aware of, how could it affect us, and

what can we do to anticipate?" Preparing these questions before the meeting will make it easier to determine who should be there and how much time you'll really need. Ultimately, a questions-based approach to your agenda can bring focus, engagement, and better performance to your meetings. And if you can't think of questions to ask, maybe you don't need that meeting after all!

This tip is adapted from "How to Create the Perfect Meeting Agenda," by Steven G. Rogelberg

Adopt a "Choice Mindset" When Facing an Ultimatum

Lots of negotiators use ultimatums to elicit concessions from the other party - and they're often successful. So what should you do if you're on the receiving end of one of these "take it or leave it" demands? One tactic is to adopt a "choice mindset," which helps you see other options. Before the negotiation, make a list of any and all choices that you and your counterpart have. Write down your choices on one side of your list and your counterpart's choices on the other side. Think broadly - don't just focus on numbers, but consider other things that might be valuable to either side. For example, if you're negotiating for a new job, of course salary is important to both of you. But if you get stuck on salary, you could negotiate on other points, such as more vacation days or less work-related travel. Or if you're buying a new car, instead of fixating on price, you could think about what additional accessories the dealer might be willing to throw in. When you understand the choices available to you - and your counterpart - you're much less likely to cave in response to a "take it or leave it" ultimatum.

This tip is adapted from "How to Respond to 'Take It or Leave It'," by Anyi Ma, Yu Yang, and Krishna Savani

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In a light vein

What is the difference between wife and girlfriend?

A grandson notices his grandpa look rather tense; so to break the ice, he asks his grandpa one question while on the way back from school: 'What is the difference between wife and girlfriend?'

Grandpa thought for a minute and then said:

Listen Son,

Wife is like a TV and Girlfriend is like a MOBILE.

At home you watch TV, but when you go out you take your MOBILE.

Sometimes you enjoy TV, but most of the time you play with your MOBILE.

TV is (as good as) free for life, but for the MOBILE, if you don't pay, the services will be terminated.

TV is big, bulky and most of the time old,

But the MOBILE is cute, slim, curvy, replaceable and portable.

Operational costs for TV is often acceptable

But for the MOBILE, it is often high and demanding.

TV has a remote, but MOBILE doesn't.

Most importantly, MOBILE is a two-way communication (you talk and listen), but with the TV, you must only listen (whether you want to or not)!

Last but not least!

Yet TVs are superior because TVs don't have viruses, but MOBILES often do.

And mobiles can be easily hacked or stolen.

Take care, stick to TV only.

Issued in Public interest!

Clever Signage!

A sign in a shoe repair store: 'We will heel you, we will save your sole, we will even dye for you!'

Sign over a gynaecologist's office: 'Dr George, at your cervix'.

At an eye clinic: 'If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place'.

On a plumber's truck: 'We repair what your husband fixed'.

On an electrician's truck: 'Let us remove your shorts'.

In a non-smoking area: 'If we see smoke, we will assume you are on fire and will take appropriate action'.

On a maternity room door: 'Push.



Push. Push'.

At a car dealership: 'The best way to get back on your feet - miss a car payment'.

At the electric company: 'We would be delighted if you send in your payment on time. However, if you don't, YOU will be de-lighted'.

In a restaurant window: 'Don't stand there and be hungry; come on in and get fed up'.

In the front yard of a funeral home: 'Drive carefully. We'll wait'.

Sign on the back of septic tank truck: 'Caution - This truck is full of political promises'.

A collection of superb, hard hitting, humorous comments...

"The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin."

-- Mark Twain

"What this country needs are more unemployed politicians."

-- Edward Langley, Artist (1928-1995)

"A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have."

-- Thomas Jefferson

"We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office."

-- Aesop

"If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free!"

-- P.J. O'Rourke

Life's Lessons

Footsteps of thoughts

An industrialist, who started from a scratch and became a living legend in his life wanted his son to go higher from his launching pad. He called his son and told him, "Unless you are aware, you are not going to succeed me. My father gave it to me only when I attained awareness and the same qualification applies to you."

"If you are not aware, some merger and acquisition predators will hand over peanuts to you and that will be the sunset of our goodwill and brand name. So, it is a challenge to you. To help you, I suggest you go to the Mentor, who taught me; tell him that my father has decided to retire. Time is short, and I have to become fully aware at the earliest; otherwise he will give away the industrial empire to charities."

On seeing the son the Mentor said, "I remember your father. He was really an authentic seeker. I hope you will prove to be of the same quality and intensity."

The young son said, "I will do everything."

The Mentor said, "Start with cleaning the learning and teaching equipment but remember that I may appear at any time and hit you with my stick, so be alert."

The son said, "But I have come to learn about awareness..."

The Mentor said, "This is how you will learn."

A year passed. In the beginning he was getting many hits every day, but slowly he started becoming aware. Howsoever absorbed in the work, he would become aware of the footsteps of his Mentor. After one year, the Mentor tried to hit him from the back while he was deeply involved in talking with another learner. But the son continued to talk, and caught hold of the stick before it could reach his body.

The Master said, "This is the end of the first lesson. The second lesson begins tonight."

The son said, "I thought that was all? How many lessons are there?"

The Master said, "It depends. The second lesson will be hitting while you are asleep."

The son responded, "My God. How can one be alert in sleep?"

The Mentor said, "Thousands of my disciples have passed this test including your father."

To begin with, he was getting hit six times, eight times, twelve times during the night. Sleep was difficult. But within six

months he started developing within himself a certain awareness. And one day when the Mentor was just going to hit him, with closed eyes he said, "Have a heart sir, you are taking so much trouble. I am young, I can survive these hits."

The Mentor said, "You are blessed. You have passed the second lesson. Up to now I have been hitting with my wooden staff. The third lesson is that now I will start hitting you with a real sword. Be alert! Just a moment of unconsciousness and you are finished."

The son thought, "Now it is becoming dangerous! A wooden stick was hard, but it was not going to kill me. A real sword. With nothing to protect; only awareness is my protection".

Lying in bed on a cold morning an idea came to his mind: "The old Mentor is becoming dangerous. Before he starts his third lesson, let me check if he himself can pass the third test or not. If he is putting my life at risk, I cannot allow him to do it without checking whether he is worthy of it."

The Mentor nudged him, "Come out of your blanket, you idiot! Do you want to hit your own Mentor with a sword? Feel ashamed! I can hear the footsteps of your thoughts... drop the idea."

The young son was really ashamed. Falling at the feet of the Mentor he begged, "Please forgive me."

As it was a question of a sword, a real sword, he became aware of everything around him, even his own breathing, his heartbeat. Just a small breeze passing through the leaves, a dead leaf moving in the wind, and he was aware. And the master tried a few times but found him always ready. He could not hit him with the sword because he could not find him unconscious or unaware.

In the next few days, the Mentor could not find a single loophole. As a valedictory present, the Mentor gave him a letter certifying the son as a worthy heir of the industrial empire.

The Mentor smiled and said, "The first lesson related to hardware, software and operators, second dealt with staff, boardroom and consumers and third with competitors, sycophants and saboteurs."

Thoughts make vibrations and minds who are fully alert can intercept your thoughts. Even before you have become aware of them. Awareness is a process of being awake. Stay alert - Stay blessed.

I told him to study.. You will get a good wife. He said Dad studied a lot.. what did he get?



They say that alcohol kills slowly.



Your Health

How to stay healthy in retirement

Where you choose to live and how you stimulate your mind can set you up for good health

When you retire, you don't just leave a job. You enter a new stage in your life. If you do something you find meaningful, you'll be happier and healthier. Volunteer at a hospital or library. Take part in projects at your house of worship. Tutor kids who need help in school. Care for animals in a shelter. Help assemble gift boxes for soldiers overseas. Long-term, this can help both your mind and body.

Man's (or woman's) best friend

A dog gives you unconditional love and more. Just 15 minutes with Fido can lower your blood pressure, heart rate, and stress level. Over time, a faithful companion can help cut your cholesterol, fight depression, and keep you active. Having a cat can also help lower your blood pressure and stress levels.

Healthy food

You're more likely to have problems linked to nutrition, like weight loss or a lack of certain vitamins, as you age. So a balanced diet of protein, fat, and carbs is more important than ever. Cut down on packaged foods, because they have lots of salt, which can raise your blood pressure. One good option is to eat like people in Greece and its region: lots of fruit, veggies, whole grains, and olive oil.

Get out of the house

An active lifestyle can help you be happier, live longer, and lower your chances of some ailments, like dementia. Play cards with friends. Travel with a seniors group. Reconnect with friends from high school or college. If you have a hobby -- like reading, knitting, or gardening -- join a club that focuses on it.

Keep tabs on your health

Regular medical checkups are a must. Your doctor can help you guard against a heart attack or a stroke by watching your blood pressure and cholesterol. Timely shots help protect you from the flu and other illnesses. If you're a woman, you need tests for breast and cervical cancers; if you're a man, your doctor can help you decide about a prostate cancer test.

Exercise for fun and fitness

Being active not only gives your health a boost, but it also helps you stay independent as you age. Pick something you enjoy so you'll keep doing it. Aerobic exercise, like walking, swimming, or dancing, can give you more energy and help keep your mind sharp, too. Exercises with weights or bands can build your strength. Yoga keeps you flexible. If exercise is new to you, ease into it, and check with your doctor first.

Behind the wheel

With time, changes in your eyesight, physical fitness, and reflexes can affect how well you can drive. Your safety depends on keeping track. Can you see road signs clearly? Are you limber enough to turn around and check traffic behind your car? Does traffic confuse you? Your doctor may be able to help with issues like these. And groups like AARP and AAA offer classes to help you measure and beef up your skills.

Bone health

If you're a woman, your bones need a boost. The



changes in your hormones after menopause can make them more brittle, a condition called osteoporosis. To fight that, make sure your diet gives you plenty of calcium, the bones' key building block. Good sources include broccoli, spinach, and low-fat or nonfat milk and yogurt. When you reach 65, have your doctor check your bones with a DEXA test -- a low-dose X-ray.

Stimulate your mind

Your brain needs exercise, just like your body. Read, do puzzles, play a musical instrument, or pick up an old hobby. Take a class in a subject you're curious about, like cooking or computers. Using your creative side, through things like painting and gardening, can help your brain stay healthy, too. For example, an acting course may boost your memory and your problem-solving skills.

Get your 40 winks

It may get harder for you to sleep through the night as you get older. You might need to pee or to shift in bed so a joint stops aching. But you can take steps to help. Stop drinking liquids 2 hours before bed. Don't have any caffeine within 8 hours of bedtime. Make your bedroom as dark as possible. During the day, limit naps to 10 or 20 minutes. To help with aches, ask your doctor if you should take a painkiller when you turn in.

Safety around the house

Household accidents become more dangerous as you age. Get nonslip mats for your bathroom floor and tub. Fix frayed rugs or carpets. Be sure there's plenty of light. Fasten down loose cords. If your home has stairs, put handrails on both sides and put anti-skid strips on the steps.

Intimacy

Physical changes can make sex fade from your life. But you can get the sizzle back. First, each of you should talk about your feelings and concerns. Reassure your partner that you're still attracted to them. Hand-holding and massages are good ways to reconnect. If there's a physical problem, like erectile trouble, see your doctor.

Manage your time well

One of the main joys of retirement is having time on your hands. You can do what you want, when you want. Researchers have found that retirees are happiest when they plan how to spend their time and make the most of it. If you manage it well, that can pay off even if you don't have lots of time to spare. And it can keep you from being bored.

Is 'Work' a 4-letter word?

Working after you retire can keep your memory and brainpower in shape, not to mention your pocketbook. If you enjoyed your old job, do a scaled-down version of it. That's an option for professions ranging from bookkeeping to home health to home repair. Or this could be your chance to try that job you always wondered about. Second careers are sometimes the most rewarding.

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Sameera Reddy says she tried to fit into Bollywood: 'I was told I was too dark, too tall, too broad'

Sameera Reddy said that as an actor, she was expected to look a certain way, and found it exhausting to fit the beauty standards

Sameera Reddy opened up about the beauty standards in Bollywood and how she tried hard to fit in. She said that she was constantly told how she was 'too dark' or 'too tall' and did not fit into the mould of the 'girl next door'.

In an interview with Bollywood Bubble, Sameera said, "I was told I was too dark, too tall, too broad. I didn't fit into that girl next door look. I had to constantly try and fit in it and it really exhausted and tired me. I don't regret it because that was my learning to learn to come to this point of loving myself unconditionally. You have to go through a point where you actually hate yourself because when you come to this point of hating yourself so much and break into pieces, you can put yourself back together in the most beautiful way possible."

As an actor, Sameera was expected to look a certain way. "It was not discrimination. More than that it was more of you have to look a certain way, whether you have to pad your chest or hips. There was always something that I had to fix," she said.

Sameera, who made her big screen debut in 2002 with *Maine Dil Tujhko Diya*, was last seen in the Kannada film *Varadhanayaka* (2013). During her second pregnancy, she had started a campaign #ImperfectlyPerfect, in which she addressed body image issues and advocated self-love. She also opened up about experiencing postpartum depression and putting on a lot of weight after her first pregnancy.

"My campaign comes from the fact that I felt completely disillusioned and broken after being pregnant the first time when I gained weight and was 105 kgs. The perfect body and the perfect face that I worked on, for my film career, broke apart and I was completely lost," she had told Hindustan Times in an interview last year, adding that it was important to accept and love oneself.



Did you know that Masaba Gupta wanted to be an actor since her teenage years?

Neena Gupta's daughter Masaba Gupta has created a big name for herself in the fashion industry. She is one of the most loved and popular designers we have in Bollywood. However, did you know that the star daughter once harboured the dream of becoming an actress? Yes, you read it right! In an interview with a news portal, Masaba revealed that she wanted to act since she was 14. However, according to him, she was dissuaded by her mother for various reasons. Masaba reportedly said that Neena Gupta told her she would be stereotyped.

Elaborating more about her dream, she added that she wanted to be an actor for the sake of vanity. She wanted to have people fussing over her in the make-up van.

Masaba was previously married to producer Madhu Mantena. They announced a trial separation in 2018. They were reportedly granted a divorce in September last year.

She is currently rumoured to be dating actor Satyadeep Misra. He was earlier married to actor Aditi Rao Hydari, but they separated in 2013. He has films like *'No One Killed Jessica'*, *'Love Breakups Zindagi'*, *'Ferrari Ki Sawaari'*, *'Bombay Velvet'* and *'Phobia'* to his credit.

Is Sangeeta Bijlani considering a comeback?

After beginning her career as a model, and finding immense success on the ramp, Sangeeta Bijlani trained her sights on Bollywood. She was a part of many successful movies like *'Tridev'*. But the actress disappeared from the screen after her last film *'Jagannath'*, which had hit the screens in 1996. In a recent interview, Sangeeta said that though she did get offers, she didn't want to take up just any project. However, she is now thinking about returning to acting. Sangeeta is happy about the way strong female parts are being written in Hindi films these days. She recently said that when she worked in films in the 80s and 90s, there weren't enough strong roles for actresses. But looking at the range of roles offered to women now, she feels that this might be the right time for a comeback.

Sangeeta is impressed with the works of female directors such as Gauri Shinde, Tanuja Chandra, Meghna Gulzar and Zoya Akhtar among others. Among the male directors, she likes the work of Shriram Raghavan, Imtiaz Ali and Milan Luthria. The actress is also keen to explore digital platforms. Sangeeta was considering a few shows, but before she could take it ahead, the lockdown was implemented.




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Urvashi Dholakia: I never got an offer for a Bollywood film and it has not bothered me either

Despite a great body of work on the small screen, the actor admits having faced certain prejudices, however, she has no qualms and is content with her journey

Amid debates that actors on TV are often labelled according to the medium they're working in, and get limited opportunities in films, Urvashi Dholakia agrees that such tags definitely exist in the industry irrespective of the medium you're ventured into, reports Hindustan Times.

"I've been in conversations for web shows previously. Given that one aspect of the industry (films) is shut, so everybody is looking towards web. But, the mindset of the makers are the same, it's just that now it has expanded to another medium," says Dholakia best known as Komolika in *Kasautii Zindagii Kay*.

Despite a great body of work on the small screen, the actor admits having faced certain prejudices, however, she has no qualms and is content with her journey.

"There have been times when I was told, 'Oh no, ye toh TV actor hai. Overexposed hai.' Abh



matlab hai toh hai na, kya kar sakte hain? I've done television all my life. I've never got an offer for a Bollywood film, but it hasn't bothered me either. I've still made a mark and place for myself - whatever little or small space - I've made it. I'm still fending for myself," she asserts.

Not paying heed to those who look down upon actors on the small screen, the 41-year-old points, "One needs to understand that TV actors also have a loyal audience. But people forget the bigger picture. Although I'm not a maker but I feel discrimination is there for sure."

While many actors feel that it's ultimately the audience who have the power to make or break an actor, Dholakia feels a lot of onus also lies with the makers.

She reasons, "I feel it's the makers who can change the mindset of the people. The audience is there to watch, they will watch what they're shown. They don't have that call (to decide what to make). Accepting it or rejecting it is their hands. The risk-takers are the makers. Some are ready to take the risk and some don't want to. That needs to change."

Following Samir Sharma's sudden demise

Hiten Tejwani: 'Not everyone can keep pace with the way the industry functions'

There are others who are attracted towards the glamorous side of it, so when reality hits hard, it gets difficult to digest.

TV actor Samir Sharma's sudden demise earlier this month left everyone in the industry shocked. Dealing with the loss, Hiten Tejwani, who had worked with Sharma in the TV show *Gangaa*, recalls him as a happy-go-lucky guy. "Samir would always smile and be excited to do his scenes. I remember meeting him a few years back on our way to Delhi. He was visiting his family. We spoke about a lot of things. I don't know why this happened but it does disturb you," recounts Tejwani.

The actor feels that life amid the pandemic somewhat become a never ending struggle and with sad incidents happening one after the other, it takes a toll on everyone's collective mental health, reports Hindustan Times.

The 46-year-old elaborates, "This 'mask and sanitiser compulsory' environment and the restrictions of not being able to step out to meet our friends and relatives, is making us frustrated and anxious. Then there is job-related stress. I feel all these combined are affecting our mental health.

It gets even tougher for those in the entertainment industry, the actor points.

"In the industry, the whole idea is that 'life goes on'. There's no time. We do tell people to reach out (if one is



feeling low), but it also happens that people avoid your calls when they know you might just talk about what's bothering you. I hope we realise how much harm it might cause missing that one phone call," says Tejwani, adding that those who come from other states to join the industry, survival during such times can be really tough.

"It's better to go home when you know there's time before work starts. If you're with family, you'll have food to eat, emotional support and everything can be sorted," he says.

Happy that the discussion around mental health is happening, he adds, "It's also sort of breaking the stigmas attached to it. That was necessary. Only when you talk, you one can find a way out of it.

'Bin Kuch Kahe' boys bond over workout sessions



Among the men of daily soaps most often than not we witness either a relationship of brotherhood or rivalry. The strength of their onscreen comrade often reflects the bond they share off-screen and it translates into what we watch. Such is the case of the boys of Zee TV's show '*Bin Kuch Kahe*'. Upon inquiry, we learned that one factor that keeps the hunks of this show, Sameer Arora, Nikhil Sabharwal, Bharat Sharma & Shivam Sood together is 'workout'. Yes, they are gym buddies.

The most fitness conscious of them all, Nikhil Sabharwal explains, "All of us mostly work out together post pack up at the apartment gym where all of us reside together in the outskirts of Jaipur. In fact, about a month ago the gym was shut for some issues, so we made it a point that we will work out wherever possible - therefore we would do dips in a garden, near the pool area sometimes even in the apartment. The effectiveness of my workout tips can be best described by the way my co-star Shivam Sood is transforming gradually."

In addition to Shivam Sood's transformation story, Shivam himself claims, "My increased gym enthusiasm is one of the most interesting things that have happened to me during the course of the show. Thanks to my co-star Nikhil Sabharwal, my otherwise regular workout has intensified to next level after I started working out with him. And the results are very evident, I was 72.1 kgs two and half months back and now I'm 67.8 kgs. In fact, in the show my character's ex-fiance keeps pushing me to get 6 pack abs & now I finally feel I'm inching towards it (laughs). We all learn from each other and motivate each other to work out and eat healthy."

On the other hand, Bharat Sharma says, "With me it's more about the maintenance of the frame therefore I try not to bulk up or go completely lean. To sum it up, I focus more on agility and vitality. Touch wood, it's been so far good, no cramps, sprains or injuries."

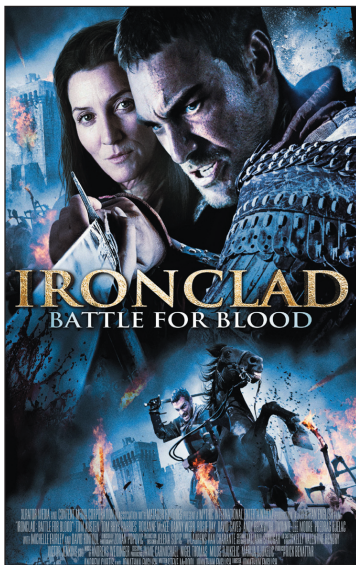
When we asked Sameer Arora about his workout regime, he said, "It has been difficult for me to work out everyday because of hectic shooting schedule and gym opens especially for us only for 2 hrs in the evening from 9 - 11 pm so it gets difficult to reach before 11 pm from shoot. The perks of playing a lead character and have more number of scenes to shoot (laughs). So basically my fitness regime can be summed up to me going for a good 30 mins run after pack up on the service road next to the highway where there is no time limitation and I do my free hand workout in the ground near to our place. And if I'm at the gym, I join my co-stars for a workout session. In addition, I follow a very controlled diet to keep myself fit."

CINE 12

Mardi 25 août - 20.10

Ironclad

Avec Paul Giamatti, Jason Flemyng, Brian Cox



mbc-1

Mercredi 26 août - 21.10

Kill Kane



mbc-2

Jeudi 27 août - 21.15



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
mardi 25 août	07.05 Local: People 09.40 Local: Couleur Marine 10.25 Mag: Euromaxx 11.00 Local Prod: Rodrig Mo Pei 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Mag: Women Who Changed 12.35 Doc: Visite Guidee 14.00 Prod: MFDC Road Safety... 14.30 D.Anime: Kid-E-Cats 15.02 D.Anime: Petit Creux 15.41 D.Anime: Les Enquêtes De... 16.11 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies 16.33 D.Anime: G-Fighters 17.05 D.Aimes: Spirit 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.00 Local: Priorite Sante 20.10 Film: Ironclad 23.05 Serial: The Blacklist 23.50 Le Journal	10.00 Serial: CID 10.44 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha 12.04 Film: Chhoti Bahen Starring: Balraj Sahni, Nanda, Rehman 14.31 DDI Magazine 15.00 Mag: Strictly Street 15.28 Serial: Honaar Soon Mee... 15.48 Serial: Mooga Manasulu 16.13 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal 16.33 Serial: Bisaat-E-Dil 16.54 Mehandi Tohra Naam Ke 17.17 Serial: Gangaa 18.00 Serial: Dr. Quin 18.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Local: Tamil Programme 20.30 Film: Ghar Sansar Starring: Sridevi, Jeetendra 22.57 DDI Live	06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa 06.44 Mag: World Stories 07.00 Mag: Voa Connect 07.29 Doc: A Question Of Science 07.30 Mag: In Good Shape 09.00 Doc: 360 GEO 10.43 Doc: Lethal Exports 11.28 Mag: Eco@Africa 11.54 Mag: Urban Gardens 12.09 Mag: World Stories 12.21 Mag: Voa Connect 12.59 Mag: In Good Shape 14.23 Doc: 360 GEO 15.15 Mag: Global 3000 16.08 Doc: Lethal Exports 16.50 Mag: Eco@Africa 17.29 Mag: Voa Connect 18.21 Mag: Urban Gardens 18.30 Live: News 18.44 Mag: Shift 19.00 Student Support Prog...	02.36 Serial: The L.A. Complex 03.16 Serial: The Good Doctor 03.57 Film: La Parole Est Au Colt 05.19 Tele: Totalement Diva 05.57 Serial: Shades Of Blue 06.51 Serial: The Bletchley Circle 09.00 Serial: NCIS 09.45 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.35 Serial: Dynasty 2 11.31 Tele: Dulce Amor 11.53 Film: La Parole Est Au Colt 13.36 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.45 Film: The Bletchley Circle 16.41 Serial: NCIS 17.24 Serial: Shades Of Blue 18.05 Tele: Soleif Levant 19.10 Tele: Dulce Amor 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Serial: Shades Of Blue 21.15 Film: Unforgotten	08.00 Film: Fareb 12.04 / 19.54 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.26 / 20.11 - Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.47 / 20.32 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe 13.31 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.56 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.20 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki 14.38 / 22.25 - Bin Kuch Kahe 15.09 Film: Lekar Hum Deewana Dil - Starring: Armaan Jain, Deeksha Seth, Nikita Dutta 18.00 Live: Samacher 18.30 Kumkum Bhagya 18.51 Piya Albela 19.13 Mere Angne Mein 19.35 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai
mercredi 26 août	06.45 Local: La Mauricienne 07.40 Local: Priorite Sante 09.00 Mag: Painting The Nation 12.00 Le Journal 12.30 Local: Groov'in 13.30 Local: Generations J 13.50 Local: Priorite Sante 14.30 D.Anime: Kid-E-Cats 14.46 D.Anime: Le Quiz De Zack 14.50 D.Anime: Polly Pocket 15.03 D.Anime: Petit Creux 16.11 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies 16.13 D.Anime: Boule Et Bill 16.37 D.Anime: G-Fighters 17.30 Serial: Lucas Etc 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.00 Prod: Lottotech 21.10 Film: Kill Kane 22.25 Serial: The Blacklist 23.10 Local: Le Journal	10.00 Pyar Ka Dard Meetha... 11.17 Suhani Ek Ladhi 12.00 Film: Dulhan Wahi Jo Piya Man Bhaye Starring: Madan Puri, Prem Krishen, Rameshwari 14.59 Mag: Strictly Street 15.23 Honaar Soon Mee Hya Gharchi 15.46 Mooga Manasulu 16.10 Apoorva Raagangal 16.34 Bisaat-E-Dil 16.53 Mehandi Tohra Namam Ke 17.15 Serial: Gangaa 17.35 Serial: Kulvadh 18.00 Serial: Dr. Quin 18.30 Serial: DDI Magazine 19.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Programme In Marathi 21.00 Film: Golden Ninja Warrior Starring: Donald Owen, Hwei-Chie Yang, Ming Tien	06.00 Mag: Rev: The Global 06.26 Mag: Urban Gardens 06.57 Mag: Check In 07.54 Doc: Garden Party 08.24 Doc: The Fight For The... 08.53 Doc: Le Rwanda Aux Fem... 10.13 Doc: Europe 11.58 Mag: Check In 12.33 Mag: Made In Germany 14.47 Mag: Close Up 15.55 Doc: Japan 2020 16.38 Doc: Empty Nets 17.29 Mag: Made In Germany 17.55 Mag: Motorweek 18.21 Mag: Urban Gardens 18.44 Mag: Healthy Living 19.30 Doc: Trajectory 20.30 MFDC Road Safety Short... 20.45 Mag: Shift 20.58 Doc: Master Of Engineering 21.50 Mag: Initiative Africa 22.16 Mag: Focus On Europe	01.26 Film: Unforgotten 02.58 Serial: Dynasty 2 03.39 Film: Hailey Dean Mysteries 04.58 Tele: Totalement Diva 05.59 Serial: Shades Of Blue 06.33 Film: The Bounty Hunter 09.00 Serial: NCIS 09.45 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.35 Serial: Dynasty 2 11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor 11.49 Film: Hailey Dean Mysteries 13.30 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.19 Mag: Hollywood On Set 14.45 Film: The Bounty Hunter 16.40 Serial: Mission: Impossible 17.22 Serial: Shades Of Blue 18.12 Tele: Soleil Levant 19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Tele: Esmeraldas 21.15 Film: Once Upon A Time In... 22.53 Tele: Totalement Diva	08.00 Lekar Hum Deewana Dil 12.04 / 19.54 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.26 / 20.11 - Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.47 / 20.32 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe 13.31 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.56 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.20 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki 14.33 / 22.25 - Bitti Business 15.09 Film: Kasam Starring: Anil Kapoor, Sudhir Dalvi, Poonam Dhillon, 17.35 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein 18.00 Live: Samacher 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.51 Piya Albela 19.13 Mere Angne Mein 19.33 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai
jeudi 27 août	06.00 Klip Seleksion 07.00 Local: Arsiv MBC 09.00 Mag: Painting The Nation 09.30 Local: World Stories 12.00 Le Journal 12.35 Doc: Visite Guidee 14.20 Prod: MFDC Rod Safety Short 14.30 D.Anime: Kid-E-Cats 14.35 D.Anime: Fruit Ninja Frenzy 14.46 D.Anime: Le Quiz De Zack 14.51 D.Anime: In The Night Garden 15.13 D.Anime: Petit Creux 15.26 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies 15.52 D.Anime: Kid-E-Cats 15.58 D.Anime: Fils De Wouf 16.25 D.Anime: Yo Yo 16.34 D.Anime: G-Fighters 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Jamai Raja 19.30 Le Journal 20.06 Film: Rahasya	10.00 Karm Phal Data Shani 12.05 Film: Toofan Starring Vikram Makandar, Priyadarshini, Jagdeep 14.18 DDI Magazine 15.00 Mag: Strictly Street 15.17 Honaar Soon Mee Hya Gharchi 15.39 Mooga Manasulu 16.01 Apoorva Raagangal 16.46 Mehandi Tohra Naam Ke 17.09 Gangaa 18.00 Serial: Dr. Quin 18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da Devi Maiya 20.00 Local: Sur Prise 21.00 Film: Dominion Starring Barry Lynch, Travis Hammer, Christine Joëlle 22.26 DDI Live	06.00 Mag: Motorweek 06.25 Doc: Zambia 07.26 Doc: Garden Party 08.44 Doc: Master Of Engineering 10.38 Doc: Bought And Sold 11.17 Mag: Motorweek 11.48 Doc: Zambia 12.14 Mag: Arts 21 14.10 Doc: 2D Innovations 17.05 Doc: Zambia 18.24 Mag: Urban Gardens 18.30 Live: News 19.05 Open Univ: Student Support 19.29 Mag: Garden Makeover 19.39 Doc: Comme Un Poisson... 21.03 Doc: 360 Geo 21.38 Mag: Strictly Street 22.01 Doc: Can Electric Cars Save... 23.26 Mag: Eco India 23.52 Mag: Urban Gardens 23.57 Mag: Sur Mesure	01.31 Film: Once Upon A Time In Mexico 03.44 Film: The Beautiful Country 05.43 Tele: Totalement Diva 06.34 Tele: Esmeraldas 11.17 Film: Still Alice 09.00 Serial: NCIS 09.45 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.35 Serial: Dynasty 2 11.16 Tele: Dulce Amor 11.40 Film: The Beautiful Country 13.40 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.45 Film: Still Alice 16.37 Serial: NCIS 17.26 Tele: Esmeraldas 18.05 Tele: Soleil Levant 19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Serial: Esmeraldas 21.15 Film: Hailey Dean Mysteries 22.46 Tele: Totalement Diva	08.00 Film: Kasam 12.04 / 19.54 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.26 / 20.11 - Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.47 / 20.32 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe 13.31 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.56 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.20 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki 14.36 / 22.25 - Bitti Business Wali 15.09 Film: Anjaan Starring: Shahrukh Khan, Madhuri Dixit, Johnny Lever, Himani Shivpuri, Deepak Tijori 17.30 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein 18.00 Live: Samacher 18.30 Kundali Bhagya

BTV	Mardi 25 août - 15.09	Stars: Armaan Jain, Deeksha Seth, Nikita Dutta	mbc-1	Jeudi 27 août - 20.10	Stars: Kay Kay Menon, Ashish Vidyarthi, Tisca Chopra
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Latin American women are disappearing and dying under lockdown

Reports of rape, domestic abuse and murdered women are way up in Brazil, Mexico, Peru and beyond since the coronavirus

It's a pandemic within the pandemic. Across Latin America, gender-based violence has spiked since COVID-19 broke out.

Almost 1,200 women disappeared in Peru between March 11 and June 30, the Ministry of Women reported. In Brazil, 143 women in 12 states were murdered in March and April - a 22% increase over the same period in 2019.

Reports of rape, murder and domestic violence are also way up in Mexico. In Guatemala, they're down significantly - a likely sign that women are too afraid to call the police on the partners they're locked down with.

The pandemic worsened but did not create this problem: Latin America has long been among the world's deadliest places to be a woman.

Don't blame 'machismo'

I have spent three decades studying gendered violence as well as women's organizing in Latin America, an increasingly vocal and potent social force.

Though patriarchy is part of the problem, Latin America's gender violence cannot simply be attributed to "machismo." Nor is gender inequality particularly extreme there. Education levels among Latin American women and girls have been rising for decades and - unlike the U.S. - many countries have quotas for women to hold political office. Several have elected women presidents.

My research, which often centers on Indigenous communities, traces violence against women in Latin America instead to both the region's colonial history and to a complex web of social, racial, gender and economic inequalities.

I'll use Guatemala, a country I know well, as a case study to unravel this thread. But we could engage in a similar exercise with other Latin American countries or the U.S., where violence against women is a pervasive, historically rooted problem, too - and one that disproportionately affects women of color.

In Guatemala, where 600 to 700 women are killed every year, gendered violence has deep roots. Mass rape carried out during massacres was a tool of systematic, generalized terror during the country's 36-year civil war, when citizens and armed insurgencies rose up against the government. The war, which ended in 1996, killed over 200,000 Guatemalans.

Mass rape has been used as a weapon of war in many conflicts. In Guatemala, government forces targeted Indigenous women. While Guatemala's Indigenous population is between 44% and 60% Indigenous, based on the census and other demographic data, about 90% of the over 100,000 women raped during the war were Indigenous Mayans.

Testimonies from the war demonstrate that soldiers saw Indigenous women as having little humanity. They knew Mayan women could be raped, killed and mutilated with impunity. This is a legacy of Spanish colonialism. Starting in the 16th century, Indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants across the Americas were enslaved or compelled into forced labor by the Spanish, treated as private



Women demand justice for Mexico's many murdered women at a protest against gender violence in Mexico City, Aug. 15, 2020. Nadya Murillo / Eyepix Group/Barcroft Media via Getty Images

property, often brutally.

Some Black and Indigenous women actually tried to fight their ill treatment in court during the colonial period, but they had fewer legal rights than white Spanish conquerors and their descendants. The subjugation and marginalization of Black and Indigenous Latin Americans continues into the present day.

Internalized oppression

In Guatemala, violence against women affects Indigenous women disproportionately, but not exclusively. Conservative Catholic and evangelical moral teachings hold that women should be chaste and obey their husbands, creating the idea that men can control the women with whom they are in a sexual relationship.

In a 2014 survey published by the Latin American Public Opinion Project at Vanderbilt University, Guatemalans were more accepting of gender violence than any other Latin Americans, with 58% of respondents saying suspected infidelity justified physical abuse.

Women as well as men have internalized this view. During my research in Guatemala and Mexico, many women shared stories about how their own mothers, mother-in-law or neighbors told them to "aguantar" - put up with - their husbands' abuse, saying it was a man's right to punish bad wives.

The media, police and often even official justice systems reinforce strict constraints on women's behavior. When women are murdered in Guatemala and Mexico - a daily occurrence - headlines often read, "Man Kills His Wife Because of Jealousy." In court and online, rape survivors are still accused of "asking for it" if they were assaulted while out without male supervision.

How to protect women

Latin American countries have made many creative, serious efforts to protect women.

Seventeen have passed laws making femicide - the intentional killing of women or girls because they are female - its own crime separate from homicide, with long mandatory prison sentences to try to deter this. Many countries have also created women-only police stations, produced statistical data on femicide, improved reporting avenues for gendered violence and funded more

women's shelters.

Guatemala even created special courts where men accused of gender violence - whether femicide, sexual assault or psychological violence - are tried.

Research I conducted with my colleague, political scientist Erin Beck, finds that these specialized courts have been important in recognizing violence against women as a serious crime, punishing it and providing victims with much-needed legal, social and psychological support. But we also found critical limitations related to insufficient funding, staff burnout and weak investigations.

There is also an enormous linguistic and cultural gap between judicial officials and in many parts of the country the largely Indigenous, non-Spanish-speaking women they serve. Many of these women are so

poor and geographically isolated they can't even make it into court, leaving flight as their only option of escaping violence.

The collective body

All these efforts to protect women - whether in Guatemala, elsewhere in Latin America or the U.S. - are narrow and legalistic. They make femicide one crime, physical assault a different crime, and rape another - and attempt to indict and punish men for those acts.

But they fail to indict the broader systems that perpetuate these problems, like social, racial, and economic inequalities, family relationships and social mores.

Some Indigenous women's groups say gendered violence is a collective problem that needs collective solutions.

"When they rape, disappear, jail or assassinate a woman, it is as if all the community, the neighborhood, the community or the family has been raped," said the Mexican Indigenous activist Marichuy at a rally in Mexico City in 2017.

In Marichuy's analysis, violence against one Indigenous woman is the result of an entire society that dehumanizes her people. So simply sending the abuser to prison is not sufficient. Gendered violence calls for a punishment that both implicates the community and the offender - and tries to heal them.

Some Mexican Indigenous communities have autonomous police and justice systems, which use discussion and mediation to reach a verdict and emphasize reconciliation over punishment. Sentences of community service - whether construction, digging drainage or other manual labor - serve to both punish and socially reintegrate offenders. Terms range from a few weeks for simple theft to eight years for murder.

Stopping gendered violence in Latin America, the U.S. or anywhere will be a complicated, long-term process. And grand social progress seems unlikely in a pandemic. But when lockdowns end, restorative justice seems like a good way to start helping women and our communities.

Lynn Marie Stephen

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